

REPORT

OF THE

DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY,

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of His Majesty.



DUBLIN.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION
(IRELAND).

R E P O R T

OF THE

DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY.

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DUBLIN CASTLE,

5th June, 1907.

SIR,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 4th instant forwarding, for submission to His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, the Report of the Committee appointed, by the Warrant of the Lords Justices of Ireland dated 31st March, 1906, to inquire into certain matters connected with the Department of Agriculture and other Industries and Technical Instruction for Ireland.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

J. B. DOUGHERTY.

THE SECRETARY,

Department of Agriculture,

and Technical Instruction Inquiry Committee,

Dublin

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WARRANT APPOINTING THE COMMITTEE.

By the Lords Justices General and General Governors of Ireland.

S. WALKER, C.

GRENFELL.

WE hereby nominate and appoint Sir Kenelm Edward Digby, K.C., K.C.B., late Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Chairman); the Honourable John Dryden, late Minister of Agriculture in Ontario; William Lawson Micks, Esq., Member of the Local Government Board for Ireland; Francis Grant Ogilvie, Esq., Principal Assistant Secretary for Technology in the Board of Education; and Stephen James Brown, Esq., J.P., Chairman of the County Kildare County Council, to be a Committee to inquire into and report upon the following matters connected with the Department of Agriculture and other Industries and Technical Instruction for Ireland, viz. :—

To inquire and report whether the provisions of the Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1899, constituting the Department, and the methods which the Department has followed in carrying out those provisions, have been shown by experience to be well suited to the conditions of Ireland; whether any, and, if so, what changes are desirable in those provisions and methods; and to report also upon the relations of the Department to the Council of Agriculture, to the Agricultural Board, and to the Board of Technical Instruction; upon its relations to local statutory bodies; upon the funds at its disposal, and the modes of employing them; and upon its position in regard to other Departments, especially those charged with educational functions.

We further appoint John James Taylor, Esq., C.B., I.S.O., to be Secretary to the Committee.

Given at Dublin Castle, the 31st day of March, 1906.

By Their Excellencies' Command,

J. B. DOUGHERTY

Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland)

Inquiry Committee.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

We were directed by the terms of the Warrant of the Lords Justices, dated 31st March, 1906,

"To inquire and report whether the provisions of the Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1899, constituting the Department, and the methods which the Department has followed in carrying out these provisions, have been shown by experience to be well suited to the conditions of Ireland; whether any, and, if so, what changes are desirable in these provisions and methods; and to report also upon the relations of the Department to the Council of Agriculture, to the Agricultural Board, and to the Board of Technical Instruction; upon its relations to local statutory bodies; upon the funds at its disposal, and the modes of employing them; and upon its position in regard to other Departments, especially those charged with educational functions."

In endeavouring to carry out these directions we deemed it our duty to consult all the bodies entrusted with statutory powers under the provisions of the above-mentioned Act, hereinafter referred to as the Act of 1899, and with this object we caused a circular letter to be addressed to each of these bodies inviting its written observations upon the questions referred to us. This letter, dated 14th April, 1906, a copy of which is set out in the Appendix, was sent to the councils of 33 administrative counties, 6 county boroughs, and 89 urban districts, as well as to the several committees appointed under the 14th Section of the Act of 1899, as follows:—21 county committees of agriculture, 12 county committees of agriculture and technical instruction, 21 county joint committees of technical instruction, 6 county borough committees of technical instruction, and 27 urban district technical instruction committees. Two hundred and fifteen local statutory bodies were thus addressed, from sixty-eight of whom we received written communications. Such of these replies as are not sufficiently quoted in the Minutes of evidence, or were not put in evidence by witnesses examined before us, are printed in the Appendix.

We held 49 sittings for the reception of *vis-à-vis* evidence, namely, 8 in London, 24 in Dublin, 2 in Cork, 2 in Limerick, 1 in Galway, 1 in Castlebar, 1 in Sligo, 3 in Londonderry, 4 in Belfast, 2 in Waterford, and 1 in Kilkenny. Our first sitting was held in London on the 27th April, and our final sitting for the reception of oral evidence was held on the 23rd November, 1906, also in London. All such sittings were open to the public and to the Press. We held 17 sittings for the consideration of the Report, which was finally agreed on by the majority of the Committee on the 6th May, 1907.

We examined the Vice-President and principal officers on the staff of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, and a large number of witnesses who were deputed to give evidence on behalf of the local bodies named. In addition to these representative witnesses, several other persons gave evidence, either as volunteers on their own behalf, or as representing particular interests. In all 264 witnesses were examined, and we may observe in this connection that in every instance where, in response to our invitation, witnesses were deputed to give evidence before us by local representative bodies, they were afforded an opportunity of appearing. Evidence was taken from every county in Ireland except Longford. Four witnesses were nominated by the council of that county, but they were unable to attend on the date fixed for the reception of their evidence.

I.

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION IN IRELAND PRIOR TO THE ACT OF 1899.

1. The earliest attempt by Government to introduce any sort of system of agricultural education in Ireland appears to have been made in the year 1837 by the Commissioners of National Education. In that year a scheme of providing farms and gardens attached to National Schools was adopted. The

Introductory.

Appendix LXV.

Action of Commissioners of National Education

Recess Committee's
Report, p. 7.
Sir Patrick Keenan's
Letter to the Lord
Lieutenant, on Agri-
cultural Education
in Ireland.
2nd Report of
Technical Instruction
Commission,
Vol. II, p. 271.
See Dr. Sturkie's
evidence, *quote*
below, par. 78.
Dr. Sturkie, 3371.

The Albert Institution.

Commissioners in 1838 established a model farm at Glasnevin, near Dublin, for the purpose of giving a training in agriculture to National School Teachers, in order that instruction in agriculture and horticulture might form part of the teaching given in elementary schools. For various reasons which will be more fully discussed at a later stage of this Report, the results achieved under the Commissioners were extremely small, and the whole system finally came to an end about the year 1900. When, therefore, the Act of 1899 came into operation, there was little or no instruction in agriculture carried on through the agency of the primary schools.

2. In 1854 the Model Farm at Glasnevin was enlarged. It was opened on the occasion of the visit of the Queen and Prince Consort to Dublin in that year, and was thenceforward known as the "Albert Agricultural College and Dairy Training Department at Glasnevin" (styled in the Act of 1899 and hereafter in this Report the Albert Institution). Courses were instituted for the separate training of male and female students at different times of the year. This system continued until the changes consequent on the passing of the Act of 1899.

The Munster Institution.

See G. Colthurst,
4788.

4788.

4786.

See How Bussell,
4606.

Scheme, par. 25.

Appendix LXVI.

Paragraphs 51-4.

3. In 1858, by the efforts of some influential residents in the county of Cork, an Agricultural School for young men was established by the Commissioners of National Education at a farm, Ballygaggin, near Cork. A sum of £970 was collected for the establishment and maintenance of this school from residents in the neighbourhood. A grant of £4,400 was obtained out of the Fund called the Irish Reproductive Loan Fund. The school, however, was not successful, and in 1873 the Commissioners advised its abandonment. The farm was subsequently advertised for sale, but before any sale could be effected a strenuous effort was made, under the influence of the late Dr. Sullivan, the Principal of the Queen's College, Cork, to induce the county Cork Agricultural Society to take steps for the preservation of the school and for placing it upon a more satisfactory basis. A scheme was framed for training young women in the best methods of dairying, and for holding two sessions a year for this purpose. The sanction of the Commissioners, and subsequently of the Treasury, was obtained, in each case with some difficulty, and the school was re-opened on August 16, 1880, on the basis above stated, and a Committee of Management appointed. A small number of male students continued to be trained at the school at times of the year when the female students were not in residence. The male students, however, were few in number, and this part of the scheme did not work successfully. The dairy school for girls was far more satisfactory, and in 1888 the accommodation provided was fully taken up. A Ladies' Committee was formed, who, in addition to the dairy training, provided instruction in plain cookery and needlework and in household management. About 1886 the Committee of the Munster Dairy School became anxious to establish a separate school for male students. After unsuccessful applications for aid from Government for this purpose, a grant of £2,000 was at length obtained from the Treasury, to be applied to some purpose of agricultural education, without any definite appropriation to the proposed school for male students. Subsequently, on May 21, 1894, a scheme framed on the recommendation of the Educational Endowment Commissioners came into force by Order in Council under the Educational Endowments (Ireland) Act, 1895. By this scheme a governing body of the institution was established and incorporated, and it was among other things provided that, subject to the other provisions of the scheme, and to the rules and regulations of the Commissioners, the Governors might exercise general supervision and control over the schools and the Institute. A copy of the scheme is set out in the Appendix. How the Act of 1899 dealt with the Munster Institution, the action of the Department of Agriculture in relation to it, and its present position and functions, will be dealt with later in this Report.

Recess Com- mittee.

4. A fresh movement was originated in 1895 for the advancement of agriculture and other industries in Ireland. A prominent feature in this

movement was the proposal to establish an improved system of agricultural education. In August, 1895, Mr. now Sir Horace Plunkett, then a member of Parliament, proposed, in a letter published in the Irish Press, that a Committee should be formed, consisting of persons of various political opinions, nominated in the first instance by Irish members of Parliament, with power to add to their number. The object was to frame a scheme of legislation to be suggested to the Government then in power, the two principal features of which should be the establishment of a Board of Agriculture for Ireland and the promotion of Technical Education. The proposal met with very general approval, and a Committee, known as the Recess Committee, was formed on the lines suggested, consisting of the following members:—

Recess Committee's
Report, Appendix A.

CHAIRMAN—HON. HORACE PLUNKETT, M.P.

The Earl of Mayo
The Lord Montagu, K.P.
Right Hon. the Lord Mayor of Dublin
Right Hon. The O'Connor Don, H.M.L.
Right Hon. Joseph M. Meade, LL.D.
Right Hon. Thomas Sinclair, D.L.
Sir John Arnett, Bart., D.L.
Sir Thomas Lee, Bart., M.P.
John Redmond, M.P.
John H. Parnell, M.P.
Richard M. Dene, Q.C., M.P.

William Field, M.P.
Hon. Mr. Justice Ross
Right Rev. Monsignor Molloy, D.D.
Thomas Andrews
Valentine B. Dillon
C. Litten Falkiner
Rev. T. A. Finlay, S.J., F.R.U.I.
Thomas P. Gill
Joseph E. Kenny, M.D.
H. Brougham Leach, LL.D.
Count Moore, D.L.

5. The report of the Recess Committee was issued in July, 1896. A leading feature in the report was the full account contained both in the body of the report and the appendices of the system of State aid to Agriculture and Technical Instruction in Denmark, France, Holland, Belgium, Wurtemberg, Switzerland, Bavaria, Hungary, and Austria.

Agriculture in
Foreign
Countries.

6. The recent history of agricultural progress in Denmark appeared to the Committee to afford the most instructive suggestions as to the measures of legislation and administration which it was hoped might be attended with similar results in Ireland. Statistics were quoted showing that Denmark stood second (next to England) amongst European nations in the proportion of wealth to population. A hundred years before it was one of the poorest countries in Europe. The change in the circumstances of Denmark is attributed to the progress the country has made in recent years in agriculture. Figures are given in the report which appear fully to bear out these statements. The export of butter, eggs, and bacon from Denmark to the United Kingdom in 1895 reached the large figure of £8,900,869, an increase of more than 1½ millions over the export of the same products two years previously. It is very instructive to notice that the great advance in this export trade was of recent growth. The trade in butter had grown up within twenty years of the date of the report, the trade in bacon within eight years. The beginning of the advance was, in fact, nearly contemporaneous with, and in a sense arose out of, the great depression of agriculture throughout Europe which occurred in the last quarter of the 19th century. The superior knowledge and instruction at the command of the Danish farmer, the system of co-operation which prevailed through the action of Danish agricultural societies, resulted in the abandonment of corn-growing for export and the concentration of the attention of the agricultural classes on dairy farming and cattle breeding. At the same time, there being no duty on imported cereals, the farmers were able to obtain abundance of cheap imported foodstuffs for cattle, an opportunity which contributed greatly to the advancement of the form of agriculture which was pointed out by the experts as that best adapted to the circumstances of the country.

Denmark
Report of Recess
Committee,
Appendix C,
Revised Edition,
1906, p. 141

7. The farmers of Denmark were enabled in a similar way to extract good from evil in the creation of their present large and prosperous export trade in pork and bacon. Before the year 1888 a large export trade in living swine was carried on, chiefly with Germany. Owing to an attack of swine fever the

export to Germany ceased in 1888. The Danish farmers consequently ceased exporting living animals, and took up bacon-curing, starting co-operative bacon factories and raising capital by a system of co-operative trading.

R., p. 142.

"Thus began the great Danish pig-rearing and bacon-curing industry, which has grown from an export of less than a quarter of a million living swine in 1887, when no bacon at all was manufactured by the Danish farmers, to an export of bacon representing upwards of a million and a quarter swine in 1895."

These and similar striking instances of the adoption of successful agricultural methods are thus remarked on by Mr. Gill, the member of the Committee who reported on Danish agriculture, and now Secretary of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction:—

"Every leading agriculturist whom I met in Denmark, without exception, insisted on attributing the intelligence and capacity for organisation of the Danish farmers and the enlightened relations which they had been capable of establishing with their Government to two special causes:—

"(1) The education received by the peasantry in the peculiar institutions which they call rural high schools.

"(2) The distribution of land amongst small freeholders."

R., p. 143.

8. A remarkable system of high schools was established by a Danish bishop about sixty years ago, in which general advanced education was the primary object, the technical side being only secondary. The high standard reached by this system of education enabled the Danish farmer to appreciate to the full the expert advice in agricultural matters provided and organised by the Government. In May, 1896, a separate Agricultural Department of Government was for the first time created. A main part of its functions was to deal with agriculture proper, with veterinary education, prevention of cattle disease, with forests and reclamation of wastes, and fisheries. The annual expenditure of the Government upon the advancement of agriculture is stated to have been about £108,000, exclusive of certain other funds applied to expenses of administration and indirectly in support of agricultural education. This sum of £108,000 was administered through or in co-operation with—

R., p. 145.

"(1) A series of voluntary associations, of which the chief are: the Royal Danish Agricultural Society; the Federations of local Agricultural Societies or Provincial Unions; the Society for the Cultivation and Reafforestation of Waste Lands, and the Danish Fisheries Societies; and (2) a Royal Élevage Commission for the furtherance of Horse and Cattle-breeding, Poultry-raising, and Bee-keeping; which Commission in turn acts through a series of local voluntary associations, chiefly co-operative, organised with special reference to these branches of agricultural business."

9. It would occupy too much space to describe in detail the organisation and working of this hierarchy of agricultural associations. The Royal Danish Agricultural Society, founded in 1769, is representative of agricultural opinion in the country, and under the new organisation acts as the advisory body and chief agent of the State in all that relates to the assistance of agriculture. The main object of all this organisation appears to be (1) the collection and diffusion of information on all agricultural subjects; (2) the application of Government grants. The pecuniary aid given by the State to Danish agriculture appears to consist in providing and paying a body of expert advisers, whose advice is available without payment both to societies and to individual farmers. These experts deal with all the various branches of agricultural operations, and some are stationed in foreign countries to assist Danish trade by information and report. The State also gives grants in aid of experimental stations; local, provincial, and national shows; prizes for good cultivation; travelling grants to enable small cultivators to gain wider experience, and other miscellaneous matters. The State moreover renders important aid to agriculture by the facilities of transit afforded by State railways and steamship companies, and by subsidies to private railway and steamship companies.

R., p. 146.

R., p. 146.

Flunkett, 124.

10. It appears that it was the example of Denmark which largely influenced the Government, in the years 1896-99, in framing a scheme of legislation to promote the development of agriculture in Ireland. The same example also aided the Department of Agriculture, when it came into existence in

1900, in administering the Act of 1899. The circumstances of Denmark and Ireland present many points of similarity. Both countries are specially adapted for the production of butter, bacon and eggs. If Ireland has the advantage of a larger variety and richness of soil and of proximity to great markets, Denmark is far in advance in the system of primary and higher education which she has enjoyed for many years, and consequently in the capacity of her population to take advantage of expert assistance and to form combinations for the supply of agricultural wants and the distribution of agricultural produce.

11. Similar lessons were also learnt by the inquiries instituted by the Recess Committee, as to the legislation and practice of other nations. Two points came out prominently as the result of their inquiries. In the first place it appears that State aid to agriculture takes the form mainly of the organisation of instruction in agriculture through the medium of agricultural courses in primary schools, of an elaborate system of agricultural colleges and schools, of example plots under expert superintendence, of itinerant instruction by travelling professors, of experimental stations and agricultural laboratories maintained by the State, and, lastly, by a number of publications containing various statistics and reports, and information and instruction in reference to any questions of special urgency.

In the second place, in addition to the instruction in agriculture by some or all of the methods above summarised, in some States direct pecuniary assistance is given to agriculture in the form of bounties to encourage the cultivation of particular crops, exemption from taxation, grants on special occasions for buying seed, reductions of rates on State railways and otherwise. Another important inference to be drawn from the accounts of agriculture in Continental countries given in the report and appendices issued by the Recess Committee, is that in almost all countries this aid is given in co-operation with, and often through the instrumentality of local societies. It has been already seen how largely this is the case in Denmark. The same principle is also conspicuous in France, notwithstanding the highly centralised character of French administration. France, in this respect unlike Denmark, possesses a highly organised system of agricultural colleges and schools, all maintained by the State.

12. In the system of French agricultural instruction, the itinerant professor bears an important part. Another matter of importance is the encouragement given by the Legislature and the State to the formation of voluntary co-operative societies, both for the supply of implements, seeds, manures, and other materials for agriculture, and for distribution of produce. At the date of the report, the total number of agricultural associations in France is given at 6,500, of which not less than 5,300 are stated to have been co-operative societies of various kinds. Monsieur Tisserand, at that time a Councillor of State and Director of Agriculture in France, in a valuable paper furnished by him to the Recess Committee and published as an appendix to their report, thus sums up his conception of the proper relation between a Ministry of Agriculture and voluntary associations:—

France.

Report of Recess Committee, Appendix D.

"A Ministry of Agriculture, whether by means of special laws or special encouragements, such as subsidies, subventions, medals, &c., should foster with all its power the combination of agriculturists—wherever such organisations do not already exist—in agricultural societies, consultative chambers, societies for insurance against mortality amongst stock and other calamities, societies for land improvement, co-operative societies (*syndicats agricoles*) for the purchase of manures, seeds, machines, &c., and for the sale of agricultural produce, credit societies, and institutions for mutual success and assistance. It ought to do its utmost to encourage such societies, to live side by side with them, to come to their support whenever it is necessary, and to lend them the help of its agents.

Jb, Appendix E, p. 211

"It ought to inform the cultivators on all facts having a bearing on their industry, and to point out new methods and discoveries by which they may increase their crops and protect them advantageously against parasites, noxious insects, microbes, &c.

"The Ministry of Agriculture in France has always taken special care to respect the independence and working of the agricultural societies. It interferes only to aid them and to stimulate them to redouble their efforts, assisting them in proportion as they assist themselves."

13. The report of the Recess Committee contained a general review of the state of agriculture and industries in Ireland, and concluded with a recommendation for the establishment of a Ministry of Agriculture and Industries in Ireland, and a scheme for the organisation of a new department.

II.

PARLIAMENTARY ACTION, 1896-1899.

Bills of 1896-7.

G. Balfour, 2

14. In 1896, after the accession to office of Lord Salisbury's Government in 1895, Mr. Gerald Balfour, then Chief Secretary for Ireland, drafted a Bill for the creation of a Department of Agriculture in Ireland. The Bill was not, however, introduced. The report of the Recess Committee was issued in July, 1896. This report, Mr. Gerald Balfour told us, "was of very great use to the Government in drafting their measure introduced in 1897."

The Bill of 1897, provided for the establishment of a Department of Agriculture and Industry, consisting of the Chief Secretary as President, a Vice-President appointed and removable as under the Act of 1899, and a Commissioner of Agriculture appointed by the Lord Lieutenant. Provision was also made for the establishment of a Board of Agriculture, consisting of the members of the Department and of other persons, not exceeding nine, to be appointed by the Lord Lieutenant. The main differences between the Bill of 1897 and the Act of 1899 were thus summed up by Mr. Gerald Balfour—

6.

"Both Bills provided for the concentration under a single department of the various functions connected with agriculture which had been previously distributed among a number of different Government departments, and both Bills provided an endowment to be applied to the encouragement and development of rural industries in Ireland. But the Bill of 1897 was confined to agriculture and other rural industries, and did not extend, like the Bill of 1899, to technical instruction. Again, the endowment provided in the Bill of 1897 was very much smaller than that subsequently provided in the Bill of 1899. But, most important of all, the machinery for administering the endowment was totally different in the two cases."

Act of 1899

G. Balfour, 4.

8.

Appendix LXIX

Sec. 1 (2).

15. The Bill of 1897 was withdrawn before it reached second reading, in view of the intention of the Government to introduce a measure for the reform of Irish Local Government, and the expectation that the "Irish local authorities could be utilised in connection with the Act creating a Board of Agriculture." In the Session of 1898 the Local Government (Ireland) Act was passed, constituting the County and District Councils. This was followed by the passing of the Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1899, a copy of which is printed in the Appendix. This Act established a "Department of Agriculture and other Industries and Technical Instruction for Ireland, with the Chief Secretary as President thereof, and a Vice-President appointed by and removable at the pleasure of one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State." Section 1 (2) enacted that "any power or duty of the Department may be exercised or performed by the President or the Vice-President," or by any person appointed by the President to act on behalf of the Vice-President during the temporary absence of the Vice-President. The language of this sub-section is perhaps somewhat more extensive, at least in point of form, than that used in similar Acts constituting Government Departments or Boards. Compare, for instance, the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, Section 102. In substance, however, the object of this and similar provisions appears to be the same—to designate the members of the Department who are empowered to act in its name, and to provide for the appointment of a deputy where necessary. In reference to the scheme of this section Mr. Gerald Balfour stated—

"It was my intention, so far as the everyday work of the Department was concerned, that the Vice-President should bear the same relation to the Chief Secretary that the Chief Secretary bears to the Lord Lieutenant in practice. In practice of course, owing to the fact that the Chief Secretary sits in the House of Commons, the greater part of the work of the Irish Government must devolve upon him, even if he has not a seat in the Cabinet. It was never my intention that the greater part of the work of this Department should devolve on anybody but the Vice-President."

It will be seen when we come to deal with the working of the Department, how this enactment appears to us to have worked in practice.

By Section 1 (3) it is provided that the Vice-President shall not be disqualified from sitting in Parliament, and by (4) he is to be an *ex officio* member of the Congested Districts Board for Ireland.

Section 2 deals with the transference of existing powers under various statutes to the new Department.

These were—

- (a.) (b.) The powers and duties of the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council under the Diseases of Animals Acts, 1894 and 1896, the Destructive Insects Act, 1877, and the Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Act, 1893;
- (c.) The powers and duties of the Registrar-General for Ireland and the Irish Land Commission with reference to the collection and publication of agricultural statistics, and of returns of average prices of agricultural produce;
- (d.) The powers and duties of the Irish Land Commission under the Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Acts, 1887 and 1891;
- (e.) The administration of the grant for science and art in Ireland;
- (f.) The administration of the grant in aid of technical instruction, as defined by the Technical Instruction Act, 1889, in Ireland;
- (g.) The powers and duties of the Department of Science and Art in relation to any public building or institution in Ireland under their control, and also any property in Ireland held by or for the purposes of that Department;
- (h.) The powers and duties of the Commissioners of National Education in connection with the Albert Institution and the Munster Institution, and also all property held by those Commissioners for the purposes of said institutions; and
- (i.) The powers and duties of the Inspectors of Irish Fisheries.

Power was given to the Lord Lieutenant, with consent of the Treasury, to transfer any of the administrative powers of any other Irish Government Department which might appear to him to relate to any powers and duties similar or analogous to those transferred. Power was given to the Department by section 5 to make, or cause to be made, or aid in making, such inquiries, experiments, and research, and collect, or aid in collecting, such information as they may think important for the purposes of agriculture and other rural industries.

By section 6 the Department might, with the consent of the Lord Lieutenant and the Treasury, appoint and pay the requisite staff, and it is provided that all expenses under Part I. of the Act, with the exception of those relating to the Albert and Munster Institutions, shall be paid out of money provided by Parliament.

16. The most distinctive and important provisions in the new Act are contained in Part II., which deals with the Council of Agriculture, the Agricultural Board, the Board of Technical Instruction, and with finance. It also contains provisions laying the foundation of the relations between the Department and the newly created local authorities. These relations have since become of great importance.

17. Mr. Balfour told us that in constructing the Local Government Bill of 1898, and afterwards in constructing the Bill of 1899, he had, throughout, the intention that the local bodies to be created by the former, and the Department to be created by the latter, should work together as much as possible. His conception was that there should be a Department with a Minister at its head responsible to Parliament, and that the Department should be the sole administrative and executive authority for the application of the Endowment provided by the Bill of 1899.

"There remained the problem of bringing the Department into close touch with the people for whose benefit the endowment was intended, and it is the machinery constructed for this purpose that probably constitutes the most novel part of the measure."

How far these objects were in practice attained, and whether any change is required in order more fully to carry out the original intention of the Act, will be dealt with later in this Report when we come to consider the working and subsequent history of the Department.

Council of
Agriculture.

SS. 7, 8

18. The "problem" above referred to, on the proper solution of which the successful working of the whole scheme mainly hinges, was sought to be solved in the following manner. A council, called "The Council of Agriculture," was set up by the Act, consisting of (a) two persons to be appointed by the county council of each county—Cork being taken as two counties—(other than a county borough) in each of the four provinces. These persons need not necessarily be members of the County Council, though in practice they usually were. (b) Persons nominated by the Department. These consisted of a number of persons resident in each province (exclusive of county boroughs) equal to the number of counties in that province, due regard being had to the representation on the Council of any agricultural or industrial organisations in the province. The effect of these provisions, it will be seen, is that the Council consists, as to two-thirds of its number, of persons appointed by the various County Councils, and as to one-third of persons nominated by the Department, subject only to the condition that there should be as many nominated members actually resident in each province as there are counties in that province. The Council of Agriculture is required to meet "at least once a year for the purpose of discussing matters of public interest in connection with any of the purposes of this Act."

SS. 11.

The members representing each province constitute separate committees on the Council, called the Provincial Committees of the respective provinces. These Committees appoint eight members of the Board of Agriculture, and four of the Board of Technical Instruction.

Agricultural
Board.

19. The Agricultural Board consists of two elements, one representing indirectly the County Councils, and one nominated by the Department. As in the Agricultural Council, the representative element is in the proportion of two-thirds of the whole body. The Department nominates one-third. The two-thirds consist of two persons appointed by each of the Provincial Committees of the four provinces. There are thus eight representatives of the four provinces, and four nominated members. These twelve persons, with the Chief Secretary and Vice-President as *ex officio* members, constitute the Board.

SS. 12.

The statutory duty of the Board is to "advise the Department with respect to all matters and questions submitted to them by the Department in connection with the purposes of agriculture and other rural industries." The financial sections, to be presently noticed, confer on the Board an executive power of a very important character. None of the unappropriated portion of the funds placed by the Act at the command of the Department, called the Endowment Fund, can be expended by the Department without the sanction of the Board of Agriculture.

Board of Tech-
nical Instruction.

SS. 13.

20. The Board of Technical Instruction has exactly the same statutory duties and financial control with regard to technical instruction, outside county boroughs, as the Agricultural Board has with regard to "agriculture and other rural industries." The members are appointed as follows:—

- (a.) Three persons to be appointed by the county council of each of the county boroughs of Dublin and Belfast;
- (b.) One person to be appointed by a joint committee of the councils of the several urban county districts in the county of Dublin; such committee to consist of one member chosen out of their body by the council of each such district;
- (c.) One person to be appointed by the council of each county borough not above mentioned;
- (d.) One person to be appointed by the provincial committee of each province;
- (e.) One person to be appointed by the Commissioners of National Education;
- (f.) One person to be appointed by the Intermediate Education Board; and
- (g.) Four persons to be appointed by the Department.

21. With regard to the formation of local committees to co-operate with the central authority, it is enacted that the council of each county and urban district may appoint a committee for the purposes of Part II of the Act. The committee so appointed may consist partly of members of the council and partly of other persons. A power is also given to any two or more public bodies to appoint joint committees. This power has been found most valuable, and has been largely used. The statute is silent as to the functions of these committees. The relations between the Department and the local committees have occupied a large place in our inquiry, and may be said to form the pivot on which the success or failure of the Act of 1899 turns.

County and Local
Committees.

Sec. 14.

22. The only other body constituted by the Act is a Consultative Committee for the purpose of co-ordinating educational administration. The functions of this committee will be dealt with at a later stage. (See paragraph 256.)

Consultative
Committee of
Education.

Sec. 22.

23. The funds placed by the Act at the disposal of the Department for the purposes of agriculture and other rural industries and of technical instruction, consist of—

Finance, Endow-
ment Fund.

Sec. 15.

- (1) An annual sum of £78,000 which was appropriated by the Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Act, 1890, to the Commissioners of National Education, and transferred by section 15 of the Act of 1899 to the Department.
- (2) An annual sum of £70,000 provided out of the income of the Irish Church Temporalities Fund for a period of fifteen years from the commencement of the Act of 1899, and at the expiration of this period such annual sum as the Treasury may decide can be paid without impairing the security for any liabilities which existed upon the Fund at the commencement of the Act of 1899. Various other sources of revenue are specified in this section which bring up the annual income of what has been called the Endowment Fund to £166,000.

These Funds have since been supplemented by sums amounting to £14,000 annually—namely, the sum of £5,000 formerly paid to the Royal Dublin Society and transferred to the Department by the Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) No. 2 Act, 1902, for purposes of horse and cattle breeding schemes; the sum of £7,000 paid from the Ireland Development Grant for technical instruction; and the sum of £2,000, being a yearly contribution from the Congested Districts Board in respect of agricultural schemes in the congested districts.

The application of the Endowment Fund is provided for by Section 16. Certain specific sums, amounting to £35,000, are to be applied to the Royal Veterinary College, the Munster Institute, and Sea Fisheries. The sum of £55,000 is given for the purpose of technical instruction in county boroughs and elsewhere, and, after defraying certain other charges, the surplus of the Endowment Fund is to be applied, "subject as regards any particular application to the concurrence of the Agricultural Board for the purposes of agriculture and other rural industries or sea fisheries." The main part of the financial administration of the Department and of the Board of Agriculture is governed by this sub-section. Its language is very wide, and the discretion of the Department in submitting proposals to the Board of Agriculture, and of the Board in approving or disapproving of the proposals of the Department, is unlimited, provided the proposed expenditure is for the purpose of agriculture or some other rural industry, or of sea fisheries. The expression "rural industries" is defined, though not exhaustively, in Section 30, and, amongst other things, is made to include "inland fisheries." Whether or not it applies to certain other industries not mentioned in the definition in Section 30 is, as will be seen hereafter, a question of some practical importance and not without difficulty.

Sec. 16 (3).

Paragraphs, 134 et seq.

We have now referred to the principal provisions of the Act of 1899 directly affecting the Department. There are many others which will have to be noticed in the course of this Report in relation to the subjects to which they apply.

III.

THE WORKING OF THE ACT OF 1899.

24. We proceed now to give some account of the working of the Department of Agriculture and of the various authorities and statutory bodies which are brought into connection with the Department by the provisions of the Act of 1899. We shall have to notice, in passing, various criticisms which have been made upon the action of the Department and the local authorities.

25. The constitution of the Department is somewhat anomalous, and cannot be understood without some reference to the political history of Ireland, and to the ideas prevalent in Ireland at the time of the passing of the Act of 1899.

A strong sentiment with which Mr. Gerald Balfour had to reckon in framing the bill of 1899 was the general distrust prevalent in Ireland of what is known as a "Castle Board." The Bishop of Ross, a member of the Council of Agriculture, and also representing the Munster Provincial Council on the Agricultural Board, in enumerating the difficulties which the Department had at the outset to encounter, says:—

"3056. Another difficulty from which the Department suffered at first was, the people through the country generally regarded the Department as a Castle Board. This is rather an historical and political question, and it is not easy for an outsider to fully grasp what is meant by a Castle Board. Mr. Brown will know it. The Castle means the Irish Government, and there is the greatest distrust, and has been in the minds of the people, of the Irish Government, and that is altogether apart from the persons who have to administer the Irish Government for the time being. It is distrust of the Institution, and if you put an archangel at the head of the Irish Government the distrust will be still there until the system was changed.

"3057. (Chairman).—That was partly aimed at by the framing of the Act, for it is a decentralising Act!—Exactly; there was a good deal of difficulty in getting the people to understand that the Department was not a Castle Board as were the Board of Works, and—I am sure Mr. Brown has had experience of this—of trying to get into the minds of the people that the Department was an independent body.

"(Mr. Brown).—Very great.

"(Witness).—And that we really were not 'Castle backs' at all.

"3058. (Chairman).—But the Act was very carefully framed with the object of preventing that idea!—Yes, and, of course, the Vice-President was to be a Minister. Last he would be in any way in connection with the Irish Government, he was to be appointed by one of the principal Secretaries of State, so that the Lord Lieutenant and Chief Secretary for Ireland would have no control over him."

The Recess Committee and Mr. Gerald Balfour were quite alive to the existence of this sentiment, and therefore it was the object of the Act to give the Department, so far as possible, an independent character. The link, and the only link, with the Irish Government was that the Chief Secretary is made by statute the President of the Department. On the other hand, it was strongly felt that, although the new Department might be independent of the Castle, there must be responsibility to Parliament. Mr. G. Balfour told us that he resisted the pressure put upon him to follow implicitly the only precedent existing, that afforded by the constitution of the Congested Districts Board for Ireland under the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1891. The Congested Districts Board was, in his view, like the Department, linked only to the Irish Government by the fact that the Chief Secretary was Chairman of it, and it was also made independent of Parliament. It had no representation in Parliament except through the Chief Secretary, who was not responsible for the action of the Board, which he could not control. It was, therefore, intended that the Vice-President of the new Department should be its working head and should represent the Department in Parliament. By Section 1 (3) the disqualification for a seat in Parliament, which would otherwise have attached to the office, was removed. Mr. Gerald Balfour stated:—

"It was, no doubt, the intention of the framers of the Act that the Vice-President should be a Minister with a seat in Parliament and should go in and out with the Government of the day."

26. In fact, however, circumstances occurred after the Act of 1899 came into force which affected materially the working of the scheme of the constitution of the Department contemplated by Mr. Gerald Balfour. Sir Horace Plunkett, who was appointed Vice-President, was a member of Parliament at

G. Balfour, 17.

18.

11.

18.

The Vice-President.

the time when the Act came into force (April 1, 1900), but he was not re-elected at the general election which occurred later in the year. There was nothing in the Act of 1899 to prevent the office of Vice-President being held by a person out of Parliament, and the Board of Technical Instruction, the Agricultural Board and Council of Agriculture passed resolutions to the effect that it would be a great misfortune if the Vice-President should not continue the work, the initial stages of which he had taken the leading part in organising and superintending. Sir Horace Plunkett was requested by the Government to remain at his post. That request was renewed, provisionally, upon the change of Government at the close of the year 1905. Consequently from the earliest days of the Department the position of the Vice-President has in fact borne a closer resemblance to that of the permanent head of a great Department of State than to the position contemplated by Mr. Gerald Balfour—that of a member of the Government in Parliament, who should be at once the working head of the Department and responsible to Parliament for the conduct of his office.

Plunkett, 165.

G. Balfour, 15-16.

27. In the absence of the Vice-President from Parliament, the responsibility to Parliament falls upon the Chief Secretary as President of the Department. By the practice of the Department, and under the power contained in Section 1 (2) of the Act of 1899, the administration is really in the hands of the Vice-President. Although the Chief Secretary is made President and could act alone as exercising the powers of the Department, it has not been the practice for him to take part in its administration. No departmental papers appear to be submitted to him, nor has he exercised any of the patronage of the Department.

The President.

Plunkett, 270-292.
162-5.

28. The responsibility both of the Chief Secretary and of the Department to Parliament, is greatly minimised by the fact that the funds which the Department controls, subject to the concurrence of the Agricultural Board are, as has been already pointed out, chiefly in the nature of an endowment annually paid over to the Department under the provisions of the Act of 1899. The existence of the Department, however, depends to a great extent upon voted moneys for salaries and other expenses, and discussions might, of course, be raised upon the Estimates, as in the case of any other department. In fact, however, very few discussions of this kind appear to have been raised, although questions by Irish members, addressed to the Chief Secretary upon points connected with the action and policy of the Department have been numerous. There has been, on the whole, little or no interference through Parliament with the action of the Department.

Responsibility to Parliament.

Plunkett, 179.

29. We proceed now to deal with the working of those provisions of the Act of 1899 which brought into existence Irish institutions with a large representative element as an aid to, and check on, the action of the Department.

The first of the bodies whose relations with the Department it is important to consider, is the Council of Agriculture. The provisions of the Act of 1899 with regard to the constitution and functions of the Council of Agriculture, have already been summarised. We have now to consider their working in practice.

Council of Agriculture.

The Council of Agriculture held its first meeting on May 29, 1900. It has held in all ten meetings; the latest of which we have cognisance was in November, 1906. The proceedings have usually lasted one day, but in May, 1901, two days were required. In each of the years 1900, 1901, and 1902, there was only one meeting of the Council; in 1903, there were two meetings; in 1904, one; in 1905, two. At the second meeting in November, 1905, a resolution was passed that the Council should meet regularly twice a year. Accordingly, in 1906 meetings were held in May and November. All these meetings have been attended by a large proportion of the members of the Council. The actual numbers are given in the Appendix.

Appendix LXIV.
Plunkett, 297.

The meetings are convened and presided over by the Vice-President of the Department. The practice has been for the Vice-President to open each meeting with an address dealing with the principal questions engaging the attention of the Department. Every third year the Council resolves itself, into

Provincial Committees, consisting of the members representing the several counties in each of the four provinces. Each of these Committees proceeds to appoint two members of the Board of Agriculture. The sittings of the Council are taken up by discussion of various questions brought forward either by the Department or by individual members of the Council. The Act of 1899 gives the Council no direct administrative power, and in the course of the evidence there has been much criticism on the ground that it possesses no means of securing that any resolution it may come to should be carried out by the Department.

The minutes of the proceedings of the Council of Agriculture from its commencement were laid before us. They record every resolution brought forward by any member, and summarise the discussion thereon. A short summary of the resolutions passed by the Council of Agriculture, and of the action taken thereon, will be found in the Appendix. The matters discussed cover a wide field. The resolutions arrived at, though not legally binding on the Department, strongly influence its action. Three typical instances relating to matters to each of which we shall have occasion to refer in detail hereafter, are the following:—

Appendix LXIII.

Paragraphs, 55, 56,
56, 105, 118, 280.

Minutes of Proceedings, May 26,
1905, Vol. I., p. 25.
Ib., April 13, 1904,
p. 31.
Ib., Feb. 2, 1905,
p. 36.
Ib., Nov. 14, 1905,
p. 41.
Vol. II., May 16,
1906, p. 7.
Ib., Vol. II., p. 5.

(1.) Some of the members of the Council took great interest in the preservation from extinction of a particular breed of horse known as the Irish Draught Horse. Resolutions having this object were before the Council in May, 1903, April, 1904, February, 1905, November, 1905, and May, 1906. It will be seen later what steps the Department took to carry out these resolutions, though the action of the Council was not entirely in accordance with the views of the Department.

(2.) A question having arisen as to continuing the financial support which had been afforded by the Department to the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, a resolution was adopted by the Agricultural Board in March, 1906, in the following terms:—

"That the Board vote a sum not exceeding £3,700 in respect of agricultural organisation, to cover a period of one year, on the conditions subjoined. They decide to continue their support of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society for the period named as a provisional measure; but they desire, before considering any further contribution for this purpose, to have the opinion of the Council of Agriculture on the subject of the best method of aiding such organisation, and they request the Department to place this subject on the Agenda for the next meeting of the Council."

At the meeting of the Council on May 16, 1906, the question was submitted by the Department, "Whether the Department should promote agricultural organisation generally; and, if so, whether they should do so through the agency of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society?" The first part of the proposition was embodied in an affirmative resolution, and passed unanimously; but a serious discussion arose as to whether the necessary action should be taken through the agency of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society. The importance of this question on its merits will be dealt with fully hereafter. Here we are referring to it in order to illustrate the constitutional position and powers of the Council of Agriculture. It is a case where both the Department and the Agricultural Board submit for the opinion and practically for the decision, of the Council a question of the greatest importance, and it seems to be assumed that the view expressed by the Council would carry with it the practical decision of the question.

Minutes of Proceedings, Vol. II., 15 May,
1905, p. 4.

(3.) Another instance is afforded by the record of the proceedings of May, 1906. The Department, with the assent of the Board, had on previous occasions expended large sums on Shows, and a question arose whether the funds of the Department justified a grant to the Dublin International Exhibition of 1907. The economical view prevailed in the Council, and an amendment was carried by 32 votes to 21 to the effect that the state of the funds of the Department did not justify any substantial contribution.

Many other instances might be given of resolutions of the Council of Agriculture having a direct practical effect on the action of the Department. Quite apart, however, from any power which its relations to the Agricultural Board may give the Council, its real importance depends on this, that hitherto

the two-thirds of the members of the Council who have been appointed by the thirty-three county councils, and the one-third who have been nominated by the Department, constitute a body of men who have been selected, speaking generally, not upon any considerations of politics or religion, but because they were, in the opinion of those sending them to the Council, the fittest and most experienced men for the purpose. Thus there has been brought together a body of men whose opinion carries with it great weight in regard to the subjects with which they have to deal. No Department constituted as the Department of Agriculture is, could afford to set at naught the deliberately expressed opinion of such a body. The Vice-President, who, as has been shown, has been throughout the working head of the Department, has frequently stated that if he lost the confidence of the Council of Agriculture, it would be impossible for him to retain his office.

Plunkett, 148, 156,
183-4.

The Agricultural
Board.

30. The Agricultural Board, constituted as already described, held their first meeting on June 14, 1900. Up to November 29, 1905, thirty-six meetings of the Board had been held, with very full attendances. The minutes of the Agricultural Board have been laid before us.

Sec. 12.

It will be remembered that the duties of the Agricultural Board as laid down in the Act of 1899 are to "advise the Department with respect to all matters and questions submitted to them by the Department in connection with the purposes of agriculture and other rural industries." There has been much criticism on the limitation of the advisory powers of the Board to matters submitted to them by the Department. On the other hand, many witnesses of experience stated that the Board, in fact, exercise a very substantial power of initiating proposals. The Bishop of Ross, who, as above stated, sits on the Board as a member elected by the Munster Provincial Council, thus gives his experience of the relations between the Department and the Board, especially as regards power of initiation:—

"3027. The relations between the Department and the Board have always been very harmonious, and there has been the utmost confidence between the Board and the Department. The Department has always submitted to the Board all important questions beforehand, and we have discussed the matter with the Department, and as a result of the discussions the schemes have been either adopted, or dropped, or modified. Usually the schemes have been adopted, generally with some alterations, but there have been instances where the schemes have not been adopted. But, of course, according to our statutory position, we have simply the right to put a veto on the finance.

"3028. (Chairman).—On the endowment!—On the endowment, but in practice it has worked out that we have a great deal more administration than that right seemed to give us.

"3029. As to finance, in the practice this, that the Department submit to the Board in the first instance the expenditure that they propose to carry out on any particular project!—No, they first submit to the Board what they propose to do a certain thing, and then they discuss the policy and the project with the Board, and after the matter is threshed out, if the Board think it would be a good thing to do, then the Board ask what will be the expense in doing it, and if the Board think the scheme would be good value for the money, they agree to the scheme and vote the money. If they think the scheme is not worth the money, they object on the question of finance, and the scheme sometimes has been dropped because the Board did not consider it worth the money. The Department has frequently brought forward projects before the Board for discussion and consideration, which it was not intended immediately to carry out, but which they thought they would do in future, and merely have the opinion of the Board on it. They have frequently brought forward projects and asked the Board to think about the matter and give them the result of their consideration, so that personally I have been quite content with the action of the Department in this regard, and I think every member of the Board has been. The question has been raised about initiative. So far as I am personally concerned, and I am sure the same is true of other members of the Board, I have had a great deal more initiative than I wished for, because my desk for the last six years has been constantly littered with communications from the Department asking me to think out such and such projects, and I have really got a great deal more work to do in that way than I wished.

"3030. Was any proposal illustrative of initiative pure and simple ever made by a member of the Board?—Certainly, decidedly.

"3031. Although that is not within the four corners of the Act!—Not within the four corners of the Act. I myself have initiated several projects."

Evidence to the same effect was given by the witnesses named in the margin.

CORRELL, 3122,
DOWNS, 3198,
NANTGUMERY,
3335-33.

It is obvious that the provision of the Act of 1899 that no particular application of the endowment fund beyond the specific appropriation under the statute, can be made without the consent of the Agricultural Board must, if the power is effectively exercised, involve very substantial control over

the proceedings of the Department. That the power is effectively exercised is attested, not only by the evidence above referred to, but by the minutes of the meetings of the Board which have been laid before us. It appears from these minutes that the practice of the Board ever since the commencement of these sittings has been as described by the Bishop of Ross. All points of importance occurring in every part of the field of the Department's operations as regards agriculture and other rural industries, are brought before the Board, and the policy is discussed as well as the expenditure. Many illustrations of this will occur in the course of our Report.

With regard to the statutory functions of the Board, that of assenting to any application of the endowment fund to agriculture and rural industries, the practice has been that, after the policy of the proposed expenditure has been adequately discussed, if it is approved in principle, the Department should submit to the Board an estimate of the probable expenditure. If the Board approve of the estimate, the expenditure authorised is incurred and an account of the manner in which the money authorised has been expended is submitted to the Board for approval. On the whole, the evidence seems to us to have established that the Agricultural Board satisfactorily discharge the duty cast upon them by the Act of 1899 of advising the Department, and exercise real control over the ordinary expenditure of the endowment fund of the Department.

31. Both of the bodies whose working we have been discussing have been the subject of much criticism before us on the ground that they are not sufficiently representative of the Irish people. Many witnesses have advocated the substitution, in place of the present Council of Agriculture and Agricultural Board, of one or more wholly elective bodies,* also that the appointment of the principal officers of the Department should vest in these small bodies.†

32. Mr. Cogan, a member of Parliament, and chairman of the Wicklow committee of agriculture, gave evidence in support of this view. He holds strongly that the Council of Agriculture and the Boards of Agriculture and Technical Instruction should be wholly elected bodies; that the Agricultural and Technical Instruction Boards should possess executive and administrative functions, and that it should be the province and duty of the Council of Agriculture to direct the policy of the Boards. This view is based on the general principle that all boards of the kind under consideration should, in Ireland, be popularly elected bodies.

In answer to further questions, he stated that he had never known, as a member of Council, any marked difference between the views of the elected and nominated members, but that the general feeling was that the Council "has no real power in the shaping of the policy of the Department or in its general administration." He went on, however, to say that he considered the Council of Agriculture, as at present constituted, did represent the feeling of the country, and that "in so far as the Council of Agriculture represents the opinion of the country the Department cannot wholly ignore the opinion of the country as expressed by the Council; but the Council has had great difficulty from time to time in inducing the Department to adopt certain lines of action."

He added that there had been no direct friction between the Council and the Department, but thought that a state of things might arise where the Department might set the Council at defiance. On being asked for an instance in which the Council had passed resolutions which the Department had failed to carry out, he quoted a "very prominent one, and of great importance to the country." This was the often-quoted case of the Irish draught horse. We shall state the evidence on this matter later on.

* O'Neill, 3130-1, 3170-1; Mooney, 11618; Butler, 11355; Corbett, 4256-60; Delany, 12363; Galvin, 6374; O'Riyan, 14327; Ennis, 11001; Horc, 10714-23; Breen, Rev. M., 5267, 5274; Downes, 3207; Sweetman, 14358; Tol, 10122.

† Bishop of Ross, 3075-7; Corbett, 4291-316; Downes, 3208-10; Hynes, Rev. J., 6773-87; Magee, 9489-91; Taylor, 9324-53; Whelan (App. I.VIII).

The result of Mr. Cogan's evidence seems to be that he desires more effective control such as would result from a complete system of election without any admixture of a nominated element. Speaking of the Agricultural Board and Board of Technical Instruction, he says:—

"The Boards, in conjunction with their executive officers, would have the preparation of all draft schemes and final approval of same when they came back from the County Committees, and no administrative action would be taken by any officer until it was first approved by the Board. At the present time the functions of the Council are of a purely academic character, called "advisory," and the Department may or may not carry out its recommendations."

We state these views at length, as they are typical of a large amount of evidence given from the political point of view. They arise from the application of a general policy of national administration to the particular case of the Department, rather than from experience of defects in the working of the existing arrangement.

It is characteristic, too, of this evidence and of that of many of the witnesses who follow the same line of thought, that Mr. Cogan gives full credit to the acting head and officials of the Department for zeal and energy in the performance of their duties, and offers some useful criticisms and suggestions as to certain improvements which he considers might be adopted. These suggestions we shall consider hereafter, but we think it not out of place to quote Mr. Cogan's generous tribute to the work of the Vice-President and officials of the Department:—

"I am satisfied that Sir Horace Plunkett, although he has made more than one grievous mistake, which are not likely to be soon forgotten, has done his best according to his lights, and, under a system of full popular control of the Department, I should be very glad to see him occupying the most prominent position on the Council and Board. I believe his whole heart is in his work, and, with the experience the last six years have brought him, I am sure no better man could be found to fill such a position. My County Committee has had many interviews with the Vice-President and the chief executive officers, and we were always received most cordially, and many of our representations have been embodied in the schemes for our county."

Similar testimony to the manner in which the business of the Department has been conducted will be found in the evidence of the witnesses referred to below.*

33. The most pronounced utterance from the point of view similar to that put forward by Mr. Cogan will be found in the evidence of Mr. John Sweetman (Meath), Mr. M. A. Ennis (Wexford), and Dr. O'Ryan (Tipperary). These witnesses represented the County Councils' General Council and were deputed to give evidence before us. This General Council consists of delegates from every county and county borough council desiring to send one. As originally constituted this body consisted of representatives from all county councils in Ireland. According to Mr. Andrews, who was himself previously a member of the General Council, and is now a member of the Council of Agriculture and Chairman of the County Council of Down, it was "established on the definite understanding, which was stated publicly and privately by its Chairman, that it would not interfere with political matters; that we should confine ourselves solely to the business of our county councils." This intention, however, Mr. Andrews states, was not adhered to, and consequently seven Northern county councils "came away."

On April 19, 1906, the General Council appointed a committee, comprising the three gentlemen above-mentioned, to give evidence upon the present inquiry, and gave the committee the following instruction:—

"That it be an instruction to the Committee that the Agricultural Council and Agricultural Board should consist solely of elected members, and that, therefore, none of their members should, as at present, be nominated by the Department.

"That the Department itself should be totally separated from the English Government, and be nominated by the General Council of the Irish County Councils, and be answerable to it and under its control."

In all other respects apparently the witnesses were given complete freedom to express their own views.

* Bishop of Elphin, 3459; Bishop of Ross, 3066; Montgomery, 3342; Andrews, 9035; Sherman-Crawford, 9085; Reade, 8826; Gere-Borch, 6933; Downes, 3198; Irwin, 10010; Edmondson, 13024; Macartha, 13373; Dolan, 13419; Turtle, 8853; Patterson, 8904; White, 8728; Haskin, 11840; Huston, 8456; Clarke, Rev. Dr., 8870; Greenbank, 8641; Dennehy, 10623.

County Councils' General Council.

Sweetman, 14211.

Andrews, 9035.

Ross, 11001.

Ennis, 11090.
Sweetman, 14258.
O'Ryan, 14227.

Mr. Ennis, who laid the above resolution before us, made the following statement :—

11881. "I think I speak the views of the General Council when I say that the intention of the Council in passing this resolution would be fulfilled if the control of the Department were vested in whatever central authority or body may be set up by the Government in the Bill they are at present framing. It would not be limited, in my opinion, to the particular body, the General Council, but whatever central authority may be constituted by the Government."

Mr. Ennis is careful to point out that he has

11892. "Received no instruction from the General Council to make any general attack upon the administration of the Department in any way, and, in fact, I say, both on my own responsibility, and as a witness for the bodies I have named, that I am glad to have the opportunity of saying that I believe the Department has done great work and good work in Ireland since it was formed in 1899. They had made mistakes, and great mistakes, but mistakes would be inherent in setting in operation new machinery, and no one could expect the Department would carry out its object without some mistakes. If I may appear in my evidence to criticize the Department in some respects, I wish it to be understood that I believe it my duty as a witness to point out where I believe defects exist, in order that I may lay before the Committee those defects with a view to their remedy. To take the work of the Department as a whole, I believe it has been a work most beneficial to Ireland and creditable to the Department."

In this respect Mr. Ennis's evidence is in marked contrast to that of his colleague, Mr. Sweetman, who stated,

11896. "The Department is ridiculed by practical farmers, because they know it is absurd for young lecturers who have gone through a course of what is called scientific farming, or theoretical farming, to attempt to show farmers who have had practical experience all their lives."

The nominated
element on the
Council and
Boards.

34. The above extracts from the evidence of Mr. Cogan and of the representatives of the General Council, and the similar evidence referred to below,* appear to us to state clearly the nature of the objection entertained on political grounds to the constitution of the Department and the various bodies connected with it. The Department is condemned by the majority of the witnesses who follow the lines above indicated, not for inefficiency or mistaken views, but because its constitution does not entirely conform to an ideal which ought, in the opinion of these witnesses, to be applied to the whole machinery of Irish Government. To enter upon a discussion of these objections would lead us into a region far beyond the limits of our Inquiry. Our duty is not to deal with the questions submitted to us from the point of view of the advantage or disadvantage, the probability or improbability of fundamental changes in the government of Ireland, but to attempt to estimate as best we can whether, under the political conditions at present existing, the actual working of the system established by the Act of 1899, has proved to be well suited to the conditions of Ireland, and what improvements are desirable either in that Act or in the methods which have been employed by the Department in its administration.

In dealing with the constitution of the Council and the Board, the question for us is, what is the justification, solely from the point of view of efficient administration, for the presence of the nominated representatives on the Council and Board of Agriculture?

It must be remembered that the Act of 1899 aimed at introducing into Ireland a wholly novel machinery for the advancement of agriculture and industries. This was, in fact, as was shown in the report of the Recess Committee, part of a movement which, during a comparatively recent period, had arisen in various parts of Europe, and in some countries had effected a most beneficial revolution in the condition of the agricultural and industrial classes. Its success, as regards agriculture, in Ireland depended upon the introduction of a better system of agricultural and technical education, upon bringing home to small cultivators the great benefits to be derived from the application of improved methods of manuring, providing seeds, breeding cattle and horses, procuring improved stocks of poultry, and in numerous other ways using their land and other resources available to them to the best advantage,

* Breen, Rev. M., 5267, 5274; Butler, 11355-7, 11361; Carey, 12849; Corbett, 4256-65; Delany, 12362-73; Downes, 3179-97, 3207; Doyle, Canon, 11140-65; Galvin, 6374; Hanna, 7755-73; Hare, 10714-59; McGlynn, Messrs., 7185-274; McKenna, Rev. E., 9697; Mooney, 11618; Nugent, 11434-6; O'Neill, 8130-1, 3179-1; O'Riordan, Canon, 4469; Toole, 10125; Vaughan, 5703.

especially providing better channels for the sale and distribution of produce. Whatever differences of opinion there may be on other questions, these and such like matters are the common interests of the country, to the furtherance of which the whole intelligence of the nation should be laid under contribution. It is essential for the introduction and spread of new ideas and new methods that as far as possible there should be present upon the bodies to whom advisory executive functions are given, a large proportion of men who from their position influence experience and knowledge are best qualified to assist in spreading the introduction of new methods throughout the country. It is probable, indeed, that such persons would be elected by county councils, and this has largely been the case in Ireland. It appears, nevertheless, to be of distinct advantage to provide a means of bringing directly into the Council a certain number of men specially qualified to speak for interests of importance to the country as a whole, or over wide areas, although these interests do not appeal with sufficient strength in any particular county, to secure that those most conversant with them should be included in the limited number—two—of representatives on the Council allotted to the county. The power of nomination conferred on the Department by the Act affords an opportunity of bringing into the Council men who fall into this category. This power appears to have been exercised with judgment. In illustration of this it may be mentioned that the Council itself, two-thirds of the members of which are appointed by county councils, have selected among its eight representatives on the Agricultural Board two of those nominated to the Council by the Department, and similarly two of its four representatives on the Board of Technical Instruction. Conversely, it is interesting to note that the Department has nominated to the Agricultural Board two of the members appointed to the Council by county councils.

Bishop of Ross and
Mr. A. Lough

Rev. T. Finlay and
Mr. P. Barber

Colonel Ennery and
Mr. A. L. Clark

As representative of much evidence we may quote that of Mr. Andrews, chairman of the Down county council and member of the Council of Agriculture:—

"(Chairman).—We have asked the question several times, and I think we always get the same answer—whether there has been any marked difference between the point of view or action of the nominated element and of the elected element?—No, so far as I am aware, there has not. In the Council of Agriculture, which I have attended regularly, I have never seen any distinction between the nominated and the elected elements. The fact is, no one seems to know or care who is nominated and who is elected; and I think probably there could be no better proof that the nominations have given satisfaction than the fact, as I dare say you have been previously informed."

8940.

"No greater proof could be given that the nominated element has been pleasing to the elected part of the Council than this. About three years ago nine members had to be elected to the different boards of the Council of Agriculture, and the Council elected for these boards five of the nominated element, and only four of the elected element. I think there could be no better proof that the Department's efforts to put the best men in this position had been successful."

8947.

Mr. O'Neill, chairman of the Dublin county council and member of the Agricultural Board, speaks from a somewhat different point of view:—

"With regard to the question of nomination, it is rather an important one, and I must say this, that in my opinion, it is economically unsound. I do not approve of having the power vested in any official of nominating representatives who will be entrusted with the administration of public funds, and, unfortunately, the nominative system in this country has always been exercised in such a way as to inspire distrust amongst the people. For that reason I think it is one that, holding the political views I do, I could not subscribe to in the main. However, I think it is only just and fair that I should say, that as far as its application to the working of the Department goes, I have no fault whatever to find with the representatives that were nominated on the Agricultural Board. They have shown a keen and practical interest in every scheme that has been brought before the Board, and they have loyally co-operated with the representatives of the people in the effort to improve the general condition of the country. So far as their status at the Board is concerned it would be utterly impossible for a stranger, if he attended every meeting of the Board, to determine from the attitude or the manner in which the deliberations were carried on, who were the nominated and who were the elected representatives."

8133.

"§151. Will that apply both to the Council and to the Board?—It substantially applies in the same way to both."

We may also refer to the evidence given by Mr. P. J. Kennedy, member of the Council of Agriculture and of the Meath county committee:—

4031.

"I am not in favour of any alteration in the present constitution of the Board and Council. I consider the retention of the present system of a nominated one-third on both bodies as most desirable at least for some years to come. If properly exercised, as I believe on the whole it has

been, the power to nominate one-third enables the Department to bring in a large number of the best business men in this country—men, many of whom are not politicians or elected members of any public bodies, and whose great personal experience of agriculture and sound business capacity could not otherwise be placed at the disposal of the Council and Board of which they form a valuable asset. The result of my experience is that the introduction of politics into every phase of local public life in Ireland is one of the great drawbacks to our local public bodies. I do not wish to be misunderstood. I am aware that a large number of our local public men who hold strong political views are also excellent business men, but I am aware also that many of them are not, and that many men who are distinguished by their inability to successfully manage their own affairs are elected by large majorities on our public bodies simply as a result of the advanced views which they propound in their public speeches."

35. We feel no hesitation in coming to the conclusion that on bodies of the character of those established by the Act of 1899 a nominated element is very desirable and cannot be dispensed with in the earlier stages of the administration of such a new system as that under consideration, and further, that the evidence established the fact that in the case alike of the Council and the Board the combination of the nominated and elected elements has worked very satisfactorily.

This result is, we think, in great measure due to the care which has been exercised in making the nominations. The Act of 1899 prescribes (section 8), as regards the nominations to the Council of Agriculture, that the nominees shall consist of a number of persons resident in each province equal to the number of counties in that province, and that the Department shall have due regard "to the representation on the Council of any agricultural or industrial organisation in the province." No such conditions are laid down in the case of nominations to the Board. Subject, therefore, to the above provision in the case of the Council of Agriculture the Department has a free hand as regards the selection of nominees. Under the statute the nominations might be made either by the Chief Secretary as President, or the Vice-President (sect. 1 (2)). In practice the nominations have been made by the Vice-President, and the evidence of the witnesses who have discussed the question before us is, we believe, unanimous that this large power has been exercised with great impartiality and with the result of adding an element of additional strength to the Council of Agriculture, the Agricultural Board and Board of Technical Instruction.

IV.

THE METHODS ADOPTED BY THE DEPARTMENT IN ADMINISTERING THE ACT OF 1899, AS REGARDS AGRICULTURE AND OTHER RURAL INDUSTRIES AND SEA FISHERIES.

In dealing with the main branch of our Inquiry, the actual working of the Department of "Agriculture and other Industries and Technical Instruction," we deal first with Agriculture and other Rural Industries and Sea Fisheries.

A.

Agriculture.

36. We will in the first place confine our attention to agriculture properly so called, including in the term the tillage of the soil, the breeding and rearing of horses and other animals, dairy farming, horticulture, poultry-keeping, bee-keeping, and the sale and distribution of agricultural produce.

The Act of 1899 fixes no precise limits to the expenditure of the endowment fund placed, as has been above explained, at the disposal of the Department and of the Agricultural Board. So much of that fund as is not specifically appropriated by section 16 (1) (a—e) is to be applied "for the purposes of agriculture and other rural industries or sea fisheries" (g). A very wide discretion is left to the Department by these words, checked only by the requirement of the assent of the Agricultural Board.

It will be convenient to consider, in the first instance, the methods of the Department in administering the powers and financial resources given them by the Act of 1899 in reference to assistance to agriculture—1, by improved agricultural education; 2, by methods other than educational.

I. AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION.

37. The first report of the Department, that for the year ending March 31, 1901, contains in a memorandum on agricultural education in Ireland by Sir Horace Plunkett an outline of the plan which it was proposed the Department should endeavour to carry out. Starting with two assumptions—(1)

"That Irish farming does admit of an improvement which, if effected, would involve a vast addition to the nation's wealth, would greatly enhance the comfort and wellbeing of the people, and would tend in some measure to check the deplorable drain of emigration;"

and (2)

"That, whatever other causes may account for the backwardness of our agricultural methods, even if all these causes were removed, a thoroughly sound and modern system of agricultural education must precede any considerable or rapid progress towards a high state of efficiency"

he proceeds to sketch the general plan of a system which, having regard to the special needs of Ireland, he considers most likely in some measure to attain the desired end. "There are in Ireland over half a million farmers and labourers, with the usual proportion of sons and daughters." How are the small owners and their families to be provided with the means of agricultural education, and be brought to appreciate the material advantages which would result from the adoption of a sound system? The difficulty common to all new systems of education is that the "supply has to precede the demand."

"A full understanding of the value of education, and consequently a desire for it, is only given to those who have enjoyed its advantages. We have already had the most gratifying proof that among the Irish farming classes are to be found far more than the usual proportion of local leaders who are enthusiastic advocates of agricultural education. Nevertheless, the difficulty I have referred to exists in rural communities in Ireland as it does elsewhere."

Sir Horace proceeds to point out the necessity of making the whole system of education of the country inter-dependent. Agricultural and technical education should not be treated as a separate system, with institutions established on a separate basis, but connected with and in relation to existing educational systems, primary, secondary, and higher. The importance of the connection between the National schools and agricultural education will be dealt with later in this Report. Following out these lines, the memorandum in question does not advocate in the first instance "institution building." This should come later on. The ground was not yet prepared for agricultural colleges on a large scale.

"Such colleges turn out agricultural professors, it is true, but they do not turn out farmers, and the farmers do not resort to them."

It was, however, eminently necessary to make some provision for training of teachers. Accordingly, the Act had provided for the taking over by the Department and the enlarging of the Albert Institution, Glasnevin, and the Munster Dairy School and Institution.

"Although we do not intend at present to multiply such institutions, we intend to make the utmost use of those we already have."

The general outline of the scheme is thus summed up:—

"Our scheme at the outset is threefold in its operation. It consists of itinerant instruction, of the utilization of existing schools, and of the training of teachers. But at a further stage, which will be reached at an earlier or a later date according to local conditions, but which should not be prematurely forced, technical schools to serve a county or smaller area, either exclusively or partially for the special teaching of agriculture, will be required. These may, and we hope will, lead up to higher agricultural institutions aided by groups of counties, the provincial line being observed if there be any strong sentiment or practical convenience to be served thereby."

"We hope eventually to see established as part of the educational machinery of every county in Ireland an itinerant agricultural instructor, whose services shall be given exclusively and permanently to the particular county to the Council of which he is attached. If there is one feature of agricultural education which, having been tested to the utmost in every country of the world, has stood that test better than any other, it is the itinerant instructor. In our researches at the time of the Reces Committee this was a feature which in every country the administrator and the educationist laid stress upon, as showing invariably most fruitful results."

Such was the outline of the scheme of agricultural education by means of which the Department proposed to set about fulfilling in part the duty imposed upon it of promoting agriculture in Ireland.

Scheme of
Agricultural
Education.

First Annual Report
p. 116, see also
Appendix XXXI

(a.) ACTION OF CENTRAL AUTHORITY.

Organisation of
Agricultural
Education.

38. We will first deal with the steps taken by the Department and the Agricultural Board independently of the local authorities.

Campbell, 1909

When the Department came into existence, for one reason or another, all attempts to encourage agricultural education with the aid of public funds had come to an end with the exception of the two institutions already mentioned, the Albert Institution at Glasnevin, and the Munster Institution near Cork and of the work of the Congested Districts Board. The Commissioners of National Education at one time had a number of schools where agricultural instruction was given by teachers who had been trained at Glasnevin, and to many of these schools farms were attached, but all these had ceased to exist before the Department began its operations. The field, therefore, which the Department had to cultivate was in many respects unpromising.

Some of the difficulties to be encountered in creating any appreciation of the value of education for agricultural purposes are thus graphically stated by Professor Campbell, Assistant Secretary of the Department in respect of agriculture :—

1915.

"The occupier of the land, himself, is not always a man of education, nor can he be expected to appreciate its advantages except as a means of his son's obtaining employment elsewhere. To induce the farmer, therefore, to make some sacrifice to give the son who is to succeed him in the holding a technical education suitable to his calling, it is necessary first of all to convince him of its advantages. It is impossible to bring the farmer himself to school, and therefore the only way he can be brought into contact with the application of science to agriculture is by sending round instructors to give lectures in the evenings; to visit holdings during the day and discuss privately with the occupier the various problems which confront him in his practice. Such an officer, if he is armed with a thorough knowledge of his business, both scientific and practical, merely fails to convince a farmer of the fact that he would have been more successful had he received an agricultural education, and that it is to his son's advantage that he should be given one. Such work, I need not point out, is, however, slow, and even in the most progressive counties requires patience and determined perseverance. It is a universal experience that the more highly educated, capable, and progressive the farmer, the more he appreciates technical education and desires it. With the agriculture of Ireland in a backward condition, where the smartest sons forsake the land, where the holdings are often too small to be economically managed, where the farmer's financial resources are very limited, where a system of agricultural credit often of the worst possible description exists, and where the people have been taught that improvement of their land may mean an increase in rent, the Committee will, I think, realise that the Department has very real difficulties to face."

The main objects of the educational policy initiated and pursued by the Department are thus stated by Professor Campbell :—

1915.

"(1.) To provide at one central institution the highest form of technical education for the training of men who are to become teachers and specialists in agriculture. This has been done at the Royal College of Science in connection with the farm and college at Glasnevin.

"(2.) To provide at least one high-class agricultural college which would form a stepping-stone to men desirous of entering the Royal College of Science, as well as men, the sons of well-to-do farmers, who wish for an education to enable them to manage their own farms, and men who desire to become creamery managers, or who wish to have a special training to fit them as horticultural or poultry experts, stewards, land agents, or other occupations in connection with agriculture. This has been provided at the Albert Agricultural College, Glasnevin.

"(3.) To provide provincial institutions at which young men who can be spared from the farm for one year can be taken in as apprentices and taught agriculture, both practical and technical, at a fee proportionate to their means. This work, which had to be delayed until teachers were trained, is now in progress at three such institutions, and the provision of others is in contemplation."

"(4.) To provide winter schools of agriculture where the sons of farmers could obtain technical training at small expense during the winter months, when they can best be spared from farm work. Twenty-three such schools were started last winter in eleven counties, where progress had already been made with itinerant instruction."

"(5.) To provide one central higher institution for the training of women in the domestic economy of the farmhouse, and of work which falls to the lot of women to perform in connection with the farmyard, as, for example, dairying and poultry-keeping. This provision has been made at the Munster Institute, Cork."

"(6.) To provide agricultural education for girls at residential and day schools of domestic economy. This has been done at a number of institutions, while the equipment of others is under consideration."

"(7.) To provide in each county instruction and advice for the existing farmers and their wives, sons, and daughters, who cannot avail themselves of other means of acquiring information, by a system of itinerant instruction in agriculture, horticulture, dairying, poultry-keeping and bee-keeping."

39. It is needless to say that the process of endeavouring to give effect to the principles above stated was a gradual one. If the central object of the plan was to spread instruction through the country by co-operating with local committees in enabling them to appoint qualified instructors, it was of the first importance to take steps to enable the local committees to find persons qualified to act as local instructors. When the Department commenced operations there were but few persons to be found in Ireland so qualified. The Department thereupon at once set about taking measures for the training of persons to qualify them to act as instructors.

Training of In-
structors

Campbell, 1295.

(a.) *Agricultural Education for Men and Youths.*

It will be observed that the plan of agricultural education above set out contemplates separate arrangements for the training of young men and young women. We will first deal with the provision made for the former.

40. The administration of the Science and Art Grant, vested in the Department by section 2 (1) (g) of the Act of 1899, carried with it the duty of the management of the Royal College of Science. In October, 1900, the Department established an Agricultural Faculty in the College, so as to bring the courses of study into close touch with the Albert Institution at Glasnevin, and to attract students to benefit by the higher education provided by the courses at the College of Science by establishing scholarships sufficient to enable them to pursue these studies at very small expense.

Royal College of
Science
First Annual Report
p. 22.
1290

The course of instruction at the College of Science extends over three years. This is considered by the Department an insufficient period for proper training for the purpose of higher agricultural education, and it is contemplated to extend the course to cover four years.

1295

At the outset in October, 1900, nine young men, all well acquainted with the practice of agriculture, were enrolled as students. A number of scholarships have been offered every year since that date. These scholarships are of the value of one guinea per week during residence, and confer the privilege of free education. The cost to the Department of each scholar is £65 per annum. The necessary funds are provided partly out of the Science and Art Grant, partly out of the Endowment Fund of the Department. In 1901 provision was made for 10 scholarships at the Royal College of Science, of which five were available for agricultural students. At a meeting of the Agricultural Board in April, 1902, a sum not exceeding £500 was voted by the Board for scholarships for the year 1902-3; in August of the same year an additional sum of £400 was voted by the Board; and further provision was made in August, 1904, and August 1905, for the same purpose. Of the 35 students in residence in June, 1906, 15 were furnished with scholarships out of the annual vote, and 20 out of the Endowment Fund.

1290

At the meeting of the Board in August, 1902, it was reported that the Treasury had consented to make provision for a Chair of Agriculture at the Royal College, and for certain assistant professors and lecturers. It was, however, considered by the Department that the Treasury arrangement was insufficient, and the Board, at the instance of the Department, voted additional sums amounting on the whole to about £1,100 per annum for the purpose of making further and better provision. Expenditure was also needed for equipment and structural alterations, if the courses of instruction which had already been begun at the college were to be continued as had been arranged. The Treasury declined to give further assistance at that time, and it was proposed that the Department should contribute £4,000, £2,000 to be voted by the Agricultural Board, and £2,000 by the Board of Technical Instruction. The Agricultural Board assented to this proposal under protest, being strongly of opinion that "the expenditure was one which should not be placed on the Endowment Fund," but should be included in the annual vote for the college. We discuss the question of the distribution of necessary expenditure between the Parliamentary Vote and the Endowment Fund in that part of the Report which deals with Finance.

Paragraphs 232 et seq.

In consequence of the absence of accommodation for resident students at the College of Science, 10 out of the 35 scholarship students in June last resided at Glasnevin. A portion also of the instruction has for the same reason been given at Glasnevin.

Campbell, 1887.

Hitherto the supply of scholarships has been sufficient for the number of qualified applicants.

"The application for them has not been all that could be desired. It has taken a few years for the youth of the country to realize their opportunities and the opening which the Department has created for teachers of agriculture."

Those who pass the examinations and are recommended for posts have proved extremely satisfactory. There is an eager demand by local authorities and other bodies for these students as agricultural instructors.

Employment of
Students in
Ireland.

41. With regard to the important question whether the training given at the courses of the College of Science serves its purpose of providing instructors for employment in Ireland, the following answers by Professor Campbell are important:—

"1334. Do many whom you turn out in this way go abroad or leave Ireland?—Not yet.

"1335. You get appointments for them here?—Immediately; we pay them rather well, otherwise they would leave us; there is a big demand elsewhere for such men."

He adds that the demand comes to some extent from England, but still more from other countries. In fact, however, one of the difficulties of the Department has been that it has not as yet been able to supply the demand for trained instructors at a rate sufficient to satisfy the requirements of the local authorities in Ireland.

Albert Institu-
tion

42. In close connection with the College of Science is the Albert Institution at Glasnevin, near Dublin. The origin of this institution has been already referred to. By the Act of 1899, it will be remembered, the powers and duties of the Commissioners of National Education relating to the Albert Institution were transferred to the Department. At the time of the transfer two courses of instruction were given in each year—one for women in domestic economy and dairying, and one, at a different time of year, for men in agriculture. This method was felt to be open to serious objection. It was expensive, requiring a duplication of staff, and it was inefficient, one course of six months in agriculture being clearly inadequate for a high-class college. The Department determined to equip the college partly as a school preparatory to the more advanced courses of the College of Science, partly as affording agricultural training to the class of young men who were prepared to pay a fair proportion of the cost of their education in order to fit themselves for an agricultural career, either as practical farmers or as teachers.

Considerable expense was incurred in reconstructing the buildings, out-buildings, in the purchase of additional land, laboratory accommodation, and classes in connection with the College of Science.

By section 15, (1) (f) of the Act of 1899, an annual sum of £6,000, "to be paid out of money provided by Parliament, representing the amount of the expenses heretofore paid out of such money in connection with instruction given in Ireland in agriculture, exclusive of any such instruction given in elementary National Schools," was placed at the disposal of the Department. This amount practically represented the expenditure on the Albert and Munster Institutions. In November, 1903, the Agricultural Board approved of a proposal to expend a further annual sum of £2,000 for the purposes of these institutions.

As to the character of the instruction given and the scholarships, Professor Campbell states:—

1886.

"The students' course now extends throughout the year, during which they are taught English, mathematics, surveying, agricultural chemistry, agricultural botany, agriculture both in the field and in the classroom, horticulture, butter-making, poultry-keeping, bee-keeping, and manual instruction in woodwork. The students devote half their time to indoor and half to outdoor studies. A resident staff, who give instruction in well-equipped laboratories, now take the place of the former system of lectures by visiting masters.

"Twenty-five free scholarships, entitling the holder to maintenance and education, are offered per annum. Farmers' sons pay £25, and others £60 per annum."

In addition to the 25 free students, there were in June last ten paying students, eight at £25 and two at £50. The scholarships cover every expense, a liberality of which Professor Campbell does not entirely approve. He thinks there ought to be some fee varying according to means or valuation. In this view we concur. The scholarships or free places, as they are more appropriately called, are much sought after. There are usually about 60 candidates for the 25 free places. Professor Campbell looks for an improvement in the system when local schools are better organised. He hopes to have the best pupils sent on from local schools by scholarships properly so-called.

The accommodation at the Albert College might be enlarged so as to admit more students than the 45 who are now there including the 10 College of Science students; but Professor Campbell evidently considers it of more importance to keep up the standard of knowledge than to increase the numbers. On similar grounds he considers that at present, at all events, one college of the Albert type is enough for Ireland.

43. In addition to the students above referred to, there are the horticultural students under training in the gardens with the view of their becoming county horticultural instructors. These are admitted after examination, as apprentices, and do the actual work of gardening free of cost to themselves; they reside outside the college, and are paid 18s. to 25s. a week. They have facilities for carrying on their studies in the college. There is no limit to the time they may continue to work in the garden. "They go on till they are qualified, or we find we cannot educate them." All those who have qualified have been appointed to vacant posts in Ireland.

44. It has been stated that many of the students educated at the Albert College did not remain in Ireland, and a member of the Agricultural Board in November, 1905, asked for information on the subject. Inquiries were made, with the result that not one of the pupils educated there since the Department came into existence had left the country. "They could not get such good posts out of Ireland as they get in it." Professor Campbell thus sums up his evidence on this point:—

"This is really of a type that is known all over the Continent as the agricultural college, as distinct from a technical high-class college where there is no farm, where it is all laboratory work. Here you have a fair share of attention given to both."

"It is between the Royal College of Science and the class of Institution I am coming to deal with now, where the pupils are really apprentices, and, of course, it is meant as a sort of sub-station to enable young men to come up from the country and get into the Royal College, and it is also meant as an institution where men who want training of that kind will get it in Ireland, and not have to go to an agricultural college in England. Formerly a man would have to go to an English college—several Irishmen did. Now it won't be necessary, because we have provided one institution of that type, but only one, on the ground that the Department believe that one is sufficient for the purpose of that kind."

45. Another class of institution has been established by the Department, or perhaps it should be said, is in process of being established. The earliest of these in point of date was that at Clonakilty, in county Cork. The Bishop of Ross, in whose diocese this institution is situated, took a prominent part in its organisation. He was one of two trustees of a property in the county of Cork who handed it over to the Department on condition that it should be worked as an agricultural station. He "almost made it a condition" that the Department should appoint a Scotchman whose acquaintance the Bishop had made, "because I thought he was the best man we could get." The appointment was made. The Bishop gave interesting evidence as to what he considered should be the leading characteristics of an institution of this kind, views which the Department substantially share and have adopted.

"Professor Campbell, Mr. Gill, and I particularly considered the matter very carefully, and I also maintained that we should remove from these institutions, as far as possible, all notions of schools or colleges, and we should remove from the students all ideas of students or scholars, that the very word would have a bad effect; * * * the young men there are not students or scholars, but apprentices to farming, and the work is altogether of a practical character."

Three of these institutions have been started—Clonsilla, as above mentioned, in county Cork; Athenry, in county Galway; and Ballyhaish, in county Cavan. It is the intention of the Department, as qualified teachers become available, to start similar institutions elsewhere. The qualifications for admission are that the applicants must satisfy the Department

"that they are to become farmers in Ireland, and that they have an immediate or early prospect of obtaining a holding."

It is hoped that these precautions will tend to prevent young men using these institutions as a means of getting into some other profession or business. It is laid down as a principle that students must pay something. This it will be remembered, is recommended by Professor Campbell in the case of the Albert College. The present fees are graduated according to the means of the parent or guardian as tested by his valuation. When the valuation does not exceed £20, £3; £30, £5; £75, £10; exceeding £75, £15; other apprentices £20.

"These would be the sons of a man in the town who is determined to make his son a farmer, and shows us that he is going to buy land, he would have to pay £20. That is the system, it has drawbacks, certainly, but that is the system which will be successful, I believe because the fee of £3 is very small. For that the apprentice is boarded and lodged and educated for a year, so you will see it is a mere nominal charge; but still he has to sacrifice something in order to get in, and there is not this question of a free place to wait for."

At this institution the course at present lasts for one year. The nature of the instruction is described as follows:—

1275

"In addition to being taught practical field operations, such as have to be performed on a well-managed holding, the apprentices receive class-room instruction in English, farm arithmetic, surveying, book-keeping, and agriculture. They also study the methods of improving land, tillage, cultivation of crops, use and purchase of manures, seeds, and feedings-stuffs, the management of pastures, dairying, butter-making, gardening, hedging, wood and iron work, etc."

1288-9.

The Department had to surmount some difficulties before any of these institutions could be established.

"Agrarian troubles have had to be faced, and, whereas in any other country the procedure would have been quite simple to acquire land, erect buildings, appoint a staff, and proceed to take in pupils, we have had to move with the utmost caution, doing one thing at a time, and to wait for local suspicions and misunderstandings to die out. There is always a staff of old retainers and old workmen at these institutions. We want to teach our apprentices first-class methods of ploughing and hedging and sowing, and so on, and to use modern implements, but we dare not put in skilled workmen to teach them; we must work with their existing men who have been there all their lives. Public opinion would not tolerate their removal, and the Department would not do so; so we have to proceed with the greatest caution, and try to do the best we can to educate them by means of the ordinary labourers that are there, and to wait, of course, until these difficulties will be removed. By and by the people themselves will say that better men must be brought in if the apprentices are to be trained, and in a year or two, I have no doubt, when they have seen the work we do, public opinion will aid us. I mention that to show you that work of this kind in Ireland is excessively difficult, and one must proceed with the utmost caution, doing one thing at a time, until you gradually build up your scheme. I only refer to that because I think it is right the Committee should understand the class of work that we have to deal with, otherwise they might picture to themselves, some of them at any rate, the sort of conditions that exist in Canada, or England, or Scotland, where none of these difficulties have to be faced."

The evidence subsequently given before us appears largely to justify the anticipation expressed. Not only have the three institutions above referred to been started at the end of the year 1905 and the beginning of 1906 with a fair measure of success, but there appears to be a widespread demand for other institutions of a similar type,* and the difficulty is rather adequately to satisfy this demand than to overcome suspicion as to the objects and methods of the Department. Professor Campbell regards agricultural stations, however, as being still "more or less experiments." He contemplates the probability of ultimately having, besides the three already mentioned, one in North Munster, one in South-east Leinster, and at least one in Ulster, but has never "contemplated going beyond that."

12286.

* *Antrim*, M'Cauley, 8821-6; *Armagh*, Huston, 8475; *Clare*, Breen, Rev. M., 5276, 5279, 5281-97; *Donegal*, Hanna, 7740-54; *Down*, Small, 10262; *Galby*, 9140; *Leitrim*, Mochan, Rev. J., 7037, 7088; *Kesh*, 6815-8; *Monaghan*, Todd, 10059-77; *Greenbank*, 9633; *Queen's*, Post 11286; *Sligo*, 6936-7; *Sligo*, Colliery, 7019-22; *Thyrone*, Crowe, Rev. P., 5740; *Thyrone*, Montgomery, 3353, 3413; *Waterford*, Coughlan, 10967-9; *Waterford*, Bolger, 10370-9; *Wexford*, 11019-21; *Wexford*, 10732-8, 10744; *Wicklow*, Carey, 12922-6.

46. We have already referred to the offer of Dr. Kelly, Bishop of Ross, of the farm of Clonakilty, in the county of Cork, to the Department for the purpose of an agricultural station. That offer was gratefully accepted by the Agricultural Board in November, 1904, and a sum of £6,000 was voted in connection with the purchase of the stock and erection of buildings. The necessary buildings were proceeded with, providing accommodation for thirty students. It was opened in October, 1905, with fifteen students. As to the number of students at this and the other similar institutions, Professor Campbell observes :—

Clonakilty
Paragraph 45.

"This is another illustration of our experience in other directions ; it requires a year or two before the people will have confidence in these institutions, and before they understand how to proceed to get into them. That is quite different from anything, for example, that I have had to deal with of a similar nature in England or Scotland. They do not read the agricultural Press quite in the same way, and you require one man in the neighbourhood to begin, and once his son has been there you will find in a year or two others will follow."

1375.

47. The agricultural station at Athenry (county Galway) is likely to become of much importance not only as an educational establishment, but for the keeping and breeding of stock and for other purposes connected with the working of the county schemes in Connaught.

Athenry.
Campbell, 15200.

Considerable difficulty was experienced by the Department in finding a suitable place for a station. At length arrangements were made with the Congested Districts Board for the taking over by the Department of a contract which had been entered into by the Board for the purchase of an estate near Athenry, consisting of 2,305 acres. Subsequently the Estates Commissioners took over from the Department 1,565 acres, leaving 740 acres to be used in connection with the agricultural station. The net estimated cost of the land retained, with the buildings upon it, was £13,086. The sum of £3,011 has already been expended on buildings, and a further expenditure of £15,000 has been provisionally sanctioned by the Board. These figures represent the cost of the educational establishment and of the stock centre, taken together.

Some trouble was encountered in dealing with the tenants on the estate. Eventually terms were arranged through the Estates Commissioners. There were no suitable buildings for resident students at the station, and a temporary building capable of accommodating 10 apprentices was erected,

Campbell, 15241-2.
1375.

"In order that one might demonstrate the set of thing the Department is going to do. The very fact that the Department had got that farm was altogether misunderstood, as is often the case, and it is necessary to begin and show the people what we are going to do. Their suspicions are aroused, they dread that some calamity is going to fall upon them from the presence of a Government institution."

In November, 1905, it was reported to the Agricultural Board that a resident master had been appointed, and was about to take up duty ; that twenty-four applications for apprenticeship had been received, and ten candidates selected as the result of an examination. Having regard to the limited character of the accommodation, the apprentices are not required to pay any fees, but are expected to work more on the farm than is usual in similar institutions. Plans for a building accommodating a considerably larger number of apprentices are being prepared, and extensive additions to the present farm buildings are contemplated to enable the institution to serve the double purpose already referred to.

48. In June, 1904, Professor Campbell brought before the Agricultural Board a proposal to establish an agricultural station for the North of Ireland, and Ballyhaise, county Cavan, which was then in the market, was purchased for that purpose for a sum of £19,000. The estate consisted of a mansion capable of being altered for the purpose required, and about 700 acres of land capable of being worked as a mixed farm. In November, 1905, it was reported to the Board that nineteen candidates for apprenticeship had been examined and eleven selected. The institution was opened in January, 1906, with twenty apprentices.

Ballyhaise.

49. As already stated, these agricultural stations must be considered as being still in the experimental stage, and no doubt, as will be seen from the details given above, the experiment is costly. If the demand for the multiplication

General
Observations.

of these stations is any test, it would seem that the general opinion is in favour of the establishment of similar institutions in other parts of Ireland. Not only is the actual cost in money of their establishment and maintenance heavy, but the Department has, in the early stages at all events, to give up for its superintendence officers of the central staff.

Campbell, 1896.

1398.

1498.

It must be borne in mind that farming mainly for the purpose of instruction does not, as a general rule, pay. Clonakilty, for instance, will probably involve a net cost of about £3,000 a year. The justification for this and similar expenditure rests upon the need for instruction in the practice of agriculture, and in the value to the farmer of the knowledge and experience gained by the methods adopted at these agricultural stations. In many parts of Ireland tillage, according to Professor Campbell, is a lost art. As to the importance of stimulating tillage there is general concurrence. No witness expressed himself more strongly on this point than Mr. John Sweetman. Young men, for instance, must be taught to plough. But this teaching at an agricultural station cannot be economical. A station farm of 600 or 700 acres, which on economical principles should be cultivated by the aid of steam or motor, has to be cultivated by the aid of horses, for those who are to be trained must plough the small holdings to which they will return, by the only method they can employ. The principle on which the Department has endeavoured to act in this and similar matters is that the institution must be adapted to the means and conditions of the people, and must aim at teaching them to make the most use of the materials, implements, and opportunities which alone will, in all probability, be available to them in after life. The method appears to us to be based on sound principles, but further experience is needed before a final verdict upon the working of the system can be pronounced.

See paragraphs 243,
258.

Winter Classes.

Campbell, 1896.

Paragraph 33

50. It was felt that, to whatever extent these agricultural stations might ultimately be multiplied, and however beneficial and widespread the influence of those who have been trained at these places might be in the neighbourhood to which they return, it was necessary to adopt other methods of instruction for those who could not give the time or money for the year's course at an agricultural station. It was found much easier for farmers to let their sons go for instruction during the winter than during the summer months, when they could with difficulty be spared from the work of the farm. It was, therefore, determined in the early stages of the Department's work to organise winter classes in those counties mainly where the itinerant instructor in agriculture had been at work for two or more years. The centres or schools where these classes were held were of different types. Several admitted residential pupils; the majority appear to have been attended by young men living at their own homes. As in other instances, the Department found it necessary at first to organise these winter schools itself. Afterwards, when the county committees had some experience of the sort of school it was intended to establish, the funds and the work were transferred to the local authorities. There is now a printed scheme circulated to the county committees, who carry on the schools, the Department giving them funds for doing it. The whole time of one inspector is practically given to these local authorities to advise them and help them in organising these schools.

Professor Campbell describes a typical school:—

1896.

"A class-room at some rural centre convenient to a village or railway junction is secured; provision is made to have it warmed and lighted; it is equipped with plain deal benches or tables, and a supply of agricultural specimens, such as seeds and manures, feeding-stuffs, grasses, and such like. Where the county itinerant instructor in agriculture is not available to teach the classes, the Department provide a special teacher for the course. The county committee advertise the school, and sometimes pay the travelling expenses of young men who attend the school regularly. In some cases the student is supplied with a mid-day meal gratis. Where a special teacher is employed, he may hold classes three days at one centre and three at a second each week during the course, which usually extends over twenty weeks, opening in October and closing in March. The number of pupils in a class is limited to twenty-four, that being as much as one man can teach properly, because we do not permit of more lectures. They have to examine the work, seeds, manures, grasses, and so on; they have to examine them, and it is largely done by tutorial work as a matter of fact. The subjects taught are agriculture, soils, tillage, cropping, manures (natural and artificial), seeds, grasses, weeds, treatment of pastures, management of live stock, including

winter dairying, valuation of manures and feeding-stuffs, simple farm account-keeping, mensuration, elementary chain surveying, and elementary science explanatory of the principles underlying ordinary farm practice. This instruction is given by the resident teacher, while lectures and demonstrations are given on horticulture and poultry-keeping by county instructors, and on veterinary science by visiting teachers. In two centres, where the classes are held for five hours on five days per week during twenty weeks, a more extended course is given, and laboratory equipment, which is considered unnecessary for the shorter courses already referred to, is provided. In these two cases a maintenance allowance of from 12s. to 15s. per week is made to pupils who, being unable to travel daily to and from their homes, find it necessary to reside at the class centres."

The question of the organisation of these classes was brought before the Agricultural Board by the Vice-President in March, 1904. He reminded the Board of the scheme sketched in the memorandum above referred to, that itinerant instruction should be followed by the establishment of certain institutions, and stated that the Department had been gaining experience as to the best means of carrying out this idea.

"With this view they had tried some types of schools, such as the Monaghan School. The experience they had gained showed the inadvisability of trying to establish a rigid system of schools. The special circumstances of the locality must, in all cases, dictate the kind of school to be encouraged. The Department proposed to aid in the establishment of a boys' secondary school of the residential type at Mount Bellew, County Galway, where the Franciscan Brothers already had a school which could easily be converted into a school of the kind contemplated."

The Board, on the proposal of the Vice-President, voted a sum of £10,000 for the initiation of this scheme. This vote covered the establishment of similar schools for the education of girls, to be explained below. Winter classes began in 1902-3, and the number of pupils attending, including those in the residential schools, rose from 48 in that year to 404 in 1905-6. The number of classes held rose from 2 in 1902-3 to 24 in 1905-6. The average age of the pupils, confined by the regulations to those over 16, was older than was expected—20 to 21. This is attributed to the influence of the itinerant instruction. Young men get interested, and "have a desire for more systematic study." Such questions as the peculiarities of various kinds of artificial manures and quality of seeds often arouse in the farmers a strong desire that their sons should be better instructed than they are themselves.

It is remarkable that these schools answer better in the country than in towns. Canadian experience is similar. The pupils come long distances to attend them, and though the period of twenty weeks appears to be a long time for young men of this class to be absent from their farms, and the twenty weeks is not always kept to, there seems to be no difficulty in retaining the pupils for a sufficient period, unless for some reason there has been delay in commencing the course. Some difficulty is felt in getting suitable buildings for the centres, but, on the whole, it is claimed that the system has been successful. As has already been said, it depends on and succeeds a course of efficient itinerant instruction, and is confined to those parts of the country where this condition exists. A list of the centres and other figures relating to Winter Schools will be found in the Appendix.

(3.) *Agricultural Education for Girls and Women.*

So far we have been dealing with the efforts of the Department to organise the agricultural education of men and youths. We have now to deal with the corresponding organisation for the instruction of women and girls.

51. It has already been pointed out that, before the establishment of the Department, a six months' course of instruction in dairying was organised for women at the Albert Institution at Glasnevin. The reason which influenced the Department in discontinuing this arrangement has also been referred to.

It will also be remembered that, by Section 2 (1) (h) of the Act of 1899, the powers and duties of the National Commissioners in connection with the Munster Dairy School and Agricultural Institute, styled in the Act the Munster Institution, and also all property held by those Commissioners for the purpose of that institution, were transferred to the Department.

Paragraph 1, 1896

1897.

1898.

Appendix I.

Paragraphs 2, 3.

The Munster Institution.

S.S.2 (1) (A) 30(1)

It was also provided that—

Seal. 24 (1) (b).

"A capital sum which shall not, save with the like concurrence of the Agricultural Board, exceed ten thousand pounds shall be applied for the purpose of purchasing and stocking additional land, and providing suitable buildings, fittings, and appliances in connection therewith for the Munster Institution."

The nature and extent of the powers and duties of the National Commissioners to which the Department succeeded, must be gathered from the scheme framed under the Educational Endowments Act, 1885, already referred to, by which the Governors of the institution had been incorporated, and their relations with the National Commissioners defined. This scheme came into force on May 21, 1894, and there does not appear to be any provision in the Act of 1899 which affects its validity. The legal position, therefore, appears to have been that the Department, under the Act of 1899, succeeded to the powers and duties of the National Commissioners in relation to the incorporated body of Governors, with the obligation of expending £10,000, which was placed at the disposal of Department for the purposes mentioned in the sub-section above quoted. The Department might also expend such further capital sums on the same purposes as might be approved by the Agricultural Board.

Unfortunately, a difference of opinion arose between the Department and the Governors as regards the lines on which the institution should be developed.

Seal. 24, 4899.

The Governors had been anxious for some years before the advent of the Department to establish a separate farm for the teaching of male agricultural pupils. Unsuccessful applications had been made to the Treasury for funds for this purpose. At last, in 1887, a sum of £2,000 was granted to be spent "on agricultural education of some sort," without mention of any specific application of the money. Immediately after the passing of the Act of 1899, and before it came into force, interviews took place between the Governors and Sir Horace Plunkett with reference, amongst other things, to the proposed school for males, and the Governors appear to have regarded the provision in the Act as to the £10,000 as intended to apply to this scheme. The idea of a separate institution for males was not discountenanced by Sir Horace Plunkett, and a letter of his to the Secretary of the Cork county council is quoted by Mr. Beamish in support of his contention that at first the Vice-President encouraged the Governors to believe that he was quite in favour of their scheme for the improvement of agricultural education in Munster.

4811.

This letter was written before the Act came into force, before the appointment of the Assistant Secretary in Agriculture, and before any comprehensive scheme of agricultural education had been framed. It, no doubt, contemplates the utilising of the £10,000 for the purpose of adding to the existing institute such a farm as was proposed by the Governors for male pupils, but it is obvious that it is entirely provisional in its character, and that if on further consideration a better method could be devised of utilising the £10,000 in conformity with the Act and organising the institute in the best interests of agricultural education, it would be the duty of Sir Horace Plunkett to promote that which on the fullest consideration, he was convinced was the best method of attaining the ends which both he and the Governors had in view. Mr. Beamish gives in detail the interviews and correspondence in which this change of view was intimated to the Governors. The substantial question was whether or not the £10,000 provided by the Act ought, and was in fact, intended to be applied to the purchase of additional land for the purpose of establishing an advanced school for male pupils, or should, as the Department proposed, be applied to an extension of the existing dairy school and the provision of accommodation and equipment for a larger number of female students, who should receive a complete course of agricultural education, comprising not only dairying, but poultry farming and other domestic industries, including domestic economy. The Department's plan, in substance, was that the Munster Institution should be organised for the agricultural education of young women on lines similar to those adopted at the Albert Institution for the agricultural education of young men. It was also, as has already been shown, part of its plan that a separate institute should be established in the South of Ireland for the education of young men, and this

4812-4822.

4826.

was afterwards carried out by the station at Clonakilty. Legal difficulties arose as to the respective rights of the Governors under their scheme or, as it was called, their "charter," and of the Department under the Act of 1899. Proposals were made by the Governors for an alteration of the "charter" of 1894 by providing for a representation on the body of the Governors of the Cork county council proportionate to the contribution from the rates which they might make. The suggestion of the Department was in effect that the Governors should become an advisory instead of an executive body. On December 20, 1902, the Governors passed a resolution by six votes to five:—

"That the Governors decline to accept the position offered them by the Department in the terms of their letter of the 21st of November."

This resolution was apparently intended as a refusal on the part of the Governors to take any further share in the management of the institution. Mr. Beamish says:—

"Practically we declined to act as an advisory committee. We left. We resigned."

Sir George Colthurst adds:—

"What we felt was this. Supposing we kept on, there was dual control. Finding it was necessary for the good of the school, if they had the power and insisted on administering without us, it was far better to let them do it. We don't wish to injure the school in any way. It was far simpler for us to withdraw."

From that date, so far as we are aware, the Governors have taken no part in the management of the Munster Institution. On the other hand, the Department has considered itself free, with the concurrence of the Agricultural Board, to enlarge and conduct the Institution on the lines above indicated.

52. We cannot leave this part of the case without expressing our regret that *no modus vivendi* should have been found whereby these two important bodies could have acted together. Both were actuated by a single motive—the advancement by what each of them considered the most appropriate means of agricultural education in Ireland. The Department had necessarily more prominently in view its scheme affecting the whole country, while the Governors had regard, as their charter provided, only to the requirements of the province of Munster. The reconciliation of the powers and duties of the Governors under their charter with the provisions of the Act of 1899, was a matter of some difficulty, as is apparent from the legal opinion taken by the Governors and printed in the notes. The Department appears to have consulted its legal advisers in reference to the views expressed in this opinion, but we do not gather that any doubt was felt as to the substantial correctness of the legal view taken by Mr. Connor, K.C., the Counsel consulted by the Governors. Assuming its correctness, it seems to follow that, in order to carry out completely the views of the Department, Parliamentary sanction was necessary. From the legal point of view it would seem that, after the so-called resignation of the Governors, both parties were to some extent in a false position. The Governors declined to carry out the duties imposed upon them by their charter or statutory scheme; and the Department acted as though no such statutory powers were in existence, and treated the Munster Institution as if it was as completely and exclusively under its control as the agricultural stations of Clonakilty or Athenry.

It would serve no useful purpose if we were to examine in detail the correspondence and communications between the parties and endeavour to ascertain whether or not this unfortunate rupture might have been avoided. It is more important to refer to the intimations given at the close of the evidence by the Vice-President and the Secretary of the Department to the effect that they would welcome the co-operation of the Governors in getting the situation regularised, and that such a result could only be accomplished by the aid of Parliament. It will, we think, be seen, when we have described the working of the Institution under the regime of the Department, that there is a far stronger case for such steps as are here suggested than existed at the time of the discussions between the Governors and the Department in 1902. We feel bound to express an earnest hope that the Department and the Governors

6220. Letter 16 June, 1902. Beamish to Plunkett.

4816. Letters, March 11, 1902, Plunkett to Beamish; Nov. 21, 1902, G.H. to Beamish, 4820.

4827.

4826.

4825.

Observations and suggestion.

Letter, Plunkett to Beamish. 6220.

4822.

Plunkett, 17282 G.H. 17141-4

may yet be able to find some method of co-operation which, while not interfering with or checking the beneficial working of the system of education now carried on, may bring to its aid the great advantage of the best local knowledge and experience. It will probably be necessary that any scheme adapted to present conditions will require either a modification of the "Charter" of 1894 or ratification by Act of Parliament. We hope that negotiations may be entered into between the Department and the Governors for this purpose and may speedily prove successful.

Subsequent
Working of the
Institution.

1422.

53. From time to time the Agricultural Board voted the sums necessary for maintenance and equipment, and in May, 1906, Professor Campbell told us that the Institution had been fully equipped, and that a complete course of training could be given to young women who were anxious to qualify for appointments under the Department and under the local authorities. There is now accommodation for fifty pupils, but the demand for admission is so great that an intending pupil has to wait fifteen to eighteen months before her turn for admission comes. There were, at the time of Professor Campbell's giving evidence, 230 candidates for admission on the Department's books. The nature of the training is thus described:—

"The aim and object of the course is to train young girls that when they return to their homes they may make better and more economic use of the materials they have to handle. An extended course, however, is given to the best pupils in order that they may qualify themselves as teachers. Four sessions are held annually, each of about eleven weeks' duration. The fee for one session is three guineas, which is all the pupils pay for education, board and lodging, and medical attendance. Here, again, is an institution where a system of allowing no one in without paying something is in vogue, and you see the great difference in the demand for admission to such a school and to Glasnevin. An examination is held at the end of each session. All students who attain the necessary standard at the end of the first session may remain over for a second on payment of a fee. Some of them may then get free places. It is considered that the six months' course of training thus obtained is sufficient for the great majority of girls who, as I have mentioned before, desire to return to their homes, or for those who, as happens in several cases, desire to obtain situations in private houses as dairy maids, laundry maids, and so on, and they can get very good situations of that kind in connection with public institutions and even in private establishments as well. The examination held at the end of the second session is, therefore, so designed as to enable the examiners to pick out those students who are likely to become capable teachers in connection with the county instruction schemes. An examination of a similar character is held at the end of the third session, and no student is given a certificate qualifying her to act as a teacher unless she has been in residence in the school for at least four sessions, and in most cases the course is extended to a fifth, or even a sixth session. The course of training includes:— (1) The practice of dairy work; (2) the working of a dairy farm, including the feeding and management of cows and pigs, the cropping of small gardens, and the manipulation of hoes; (3) poultry keeping; (4) household work, including plain cookery, needlework, and laundry work."

Loughrey.
Campbell, 1429.

1422.

54. The Munster Institution, though originally intended to serve only the needs of the province of Munster, draws its pupils from all parts of Ireland. The Department is taking steps to establish a similar institution in the North of Ireland, and in May, last year, purchased for the purpose the Loughrey estate in county Tyrone. In Professor Campbell's opinion it was prudent to wait before taking this step, which had for some time been under consideration, in order "to make quite sure that this demand was a genuine demand and one that would increase." There is, he adds, no doubt about it now:—

1429.

1440.

"I have no hesitation in saying it is due to the excellent training we give the girls there now; we have specialists in the different departments, and have spared no pains to get some of the very best teachers of these subjects, and they are attracting these girls, I am quite sure."

See Memorandum on
County Schemes.

It is right to add that, from our own observations and on the evidence which has been brought before us in various parts of Ireland, we consider Professor Campbell is justified in the claim he makes on behalf of the training of young women at the Munster Institution.

Rural Schools.
Campbell, 1445.

Paragraph 35.

1445

55. The Department has also established certain small rural schools of domestic economy for girls. These are at Portunna (Galway), Westport (Mayo), Loughglynn (Roscommon), and Dunmanway (Cork). These schools are not of a residential character. Instruction is given to the daughters of the neighbouring farmers, who live in some cases at considerable distances. These schools are attached to convents, and are practically carried on by the nuns under the supervision of the Department.

In most of these convent schools, besides the training in agriculture and rural domestic courses, industries such as lacework, artificial flower-making,

crochet, carpet-making, &c., are also taught, and the girls are able thereby to make some small earnings. The teaching of industries of this character will be referred to in that portion of this Report which deals with technical instruction. There are many points in which it is difficult to draw the line between agricultural and technical instruction. The nuns and their ecclesiastical superiors take great pains in training some of their own body as qualified teachers and introducing trained teachers from outside. Interesting evidence on this point was given us by Dr. Kelly, Bishop of Ross, and Dr. Clancy, Bishop of Elphin. Dr. Kelly said:—

"We cannot boast of having the class of domestic knowledge they have in France. I felt very keen about this, and I impressed this upon the religious communities of nuns in my diocese, and told them they should get training in order to teach. They agreed, and I worked out a scheme to gather them together in one place, two or three sisters from each convent; they were to contribute *pro rata* to the expense, and I would get a teacher for them. This was agreed to, and I applied to Mr. Blain, who was at the head of the Technical Branch here in Dublin, to recommend me a teacher. He inquired what I was going to do, and I told him. He said, 'We can save you the expense of the teacher; that comes within the functions of the Department, and we will supply you with a teacher.' I was very pleased, and then, in consultation with Mr. Rich, who is now under the London County Council—he was at that time stationed in Cork as Inspector—in consultation with Mr. Rich we got a Scotch lady, a Presbyterian; we got her into the convent. And perhaps I may say that the admiration and the affection between this lady and the nuns, the mutual admiration and affection, was something literally amusing. Those ladies were trained, and I may say that that was an act of initiative. She spent a year training those Sisters in my diocese. The following year she trained the nuns of the diocese of Cloyne; at the present moment she is working in Thurles, training the nuns of the Counties Tipperary and Wexford, and for next year she is engaged to go to Kilkenny to train the nuns of Kilkenny and Osney. The nuns were then examined by the Department and got certificates from the Department as certificated teachers of domestic economy; they were examined by the Education Board in South Kensington in hygiene, and got certificates there also."

Dr. Clancy, in whose diocese the convent and school of Loughglynn is situated, gave us the following account of the establishment of the school and of the work carried on there:—

"I was rash enough some years ago to take over from the Congested Districts Board a large house at Loughglynn, the mansion on the Dillon estate, about which so much has been heard, and I found myself in possession of this large house and about seventy or eighty acres of land, and I set about initiating, and I am glad to say, with the assistance of the Department, my initiative has been crowned with the most brilliant success. I invited over a number of Belgian nuns, who were thoroughly trained in every department of agriculture, who have no difficulty in looking after the operations in the fields as well as in the house, and know dairying, the rearing of calves, the cultivation of poultry and all these things; I got them over to take charge of the institution; the Department was good enough to give a very generous help to the venture, and the results are of the most satisfactory character. We have at present 120 girls on the roll of our school; the average attendance every day is seventy or eighty, and those girls come to learn how to manage the dairy, they churn, they make butter, they even make cheese; we can send the most delicious specimens of cheese to the market at the present time from there; they are brought out in relays to a small experimental plot and taught all the operations of agriculture; the pupils are brought to the poultry yard and everything connected with the rearing of poultry is explained to them. They are brought then to the farmyard, where the management of calves and young stock is exemplified to them, and then, when the work of that rougher character has been completed, they are brought into a large schoolroom, and they stay there for four or five hours in the day and turn out the most admirable specimens of lace, crochet and embroidery; they are even making carpets which can enter into keen competition with the best carpets produced in Donegal. I hope I shall not get credit for advertising them here. I mention that to show what can be done in rural districts, in the first place to give a solid instruction suitable in every way to their locality and circumstances to our country girls, and in the second place I introduce it for the purpose of showing the Board the initiative which I myself have shown, and which proved such a success under the fostering care of the Department."

56. This and similar schools are financed by the Department to the extent that the Department pays the teachers and provides the equipment, and puts up, or adapts, any necessary or available buildings. A small sum is also usually paid to the convent for necessary administrative expenses.

The Department makes it a principle that as far as possible the girl who comes from poor districts such as those in the neighbourhood of Westport or Loughglynn should be taught with a view to her returning to her own home, and there making the best use of the only means and implements which will be available to her. The use of the dash churn, which is the common churn of the neighbourhood, is taught, as well as that of the more costly barrel churn, and instead of the range, the girl has to learn the resources which are available for baking and other culinary operations in the iron pot with a lid on which the live turf is placed and in the turf fire on an open

System adopted.
Campbell, 1899

hearth. The same principle leads to the discouragement of residential pupils. Speaking of the daughters of small farmers, Professor Campbell says:—

"You take such a girl to the Munster Institute; we get girls there who were never up or down a stairs; it is not good to keep that girl for six weeks or more and send her back to a small cottage, and expect she is going to live there; it is much better to educate her while she is living at home and sending to the school daily."

At one of the convents we visited we were besought to induce the Department to allow the "two 'r's,' residence and ranges." We are, however, inclined to think that under the circumstances the Department is right.

Professor Campbell is strongly in favour of an extension of this kind of education.

"All we want is more staff. There are applications in my office from several convents who are anxious to discuss this with us, and offer pretty fair facilities for doing the work, but it is impossible for me to get to see them and organise them, and a lot of organisation has to be done; we have to draw the plans of the buildings and get specifications and see that they are erected and pay for them, and it takes an immense amount of detailed work, which is thrown upon our inspectors; sometimes we have to plan out their farms for them, and lay out their gardens for them. We get at that work whenever we can get a minute, but I have got no systematic branch for dealing with it, and can only do it in my spare time. I should like to give my whole attention to this for a few years; that is the sort of school we are aiming at."

57. The Department has also organised what are called *Bean-an-Tighe* (woman of the house) classes in domestic economy. These classes are further referred to under the head of Technical Instruction.

(b). *JOINT ACTION OF CENTRAL AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES.*

58. Although in endeavouring to give an account of the system of agricultural education established and carried on by the Department, it has been convenient to postpone the consideration of the system of itinerant instruction until the other agencies at present at work had been dealt with, in order of time itinerant instruction comes first. In Ireland, as in other countries, this method of teaching must always hold an important place in the system of agricultural education. In Ireland especially, the circumstances of the agricultural classes are such that improved methods and systematic knowledge must be brought within their reach, and as far as possible to their own doors.

59. Hitherto we have been dealing with that part of the arrangements for agricultural education which has been established, financed, and carried on solely by the agency of the central authority, that is, the Department and the Agricultural Board. We come now to deal with that portion of the system created by the Act of 1899, which invites the co-operation of the local authority—the county councils—created by the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, with the central authority.

The Act of 1899 provides (Sec. 14):—

"(1.) The council of any county or of any urban district may appoint a committee for the purposes of this part of this Act, consisting partly of members of their own body and partly of other persons.

"(2.) Any two or more public bodies may, subject to regulations of the Department, appoint a joint committee for the purposes of this part of this Act, with such representation thereon of each public body as, subject to the provisions of this Act, may be agreed upon or, in case of dispute, determined by the Department."

Every one of the councils of the thirty-three administrative counties has exercised the power given by the above section of appointing a committee for the purposes of the first part of the Act. Twenty-one counties have appointed separate committees of agriculture, and the remaining twelve have appointed the same committee both for agriculture and technical instruction.

The action of the urban councils will be explained in that part of the Report which deals with technical instruction.

60. The power given by the Act of appointing on the committees persons other than members of the county council has been very liberally exercised. It will be seen from the table set out in the Appendix that a very large proportion of the committees usually consists of persons who are not members of the county council. As in the majority of cases the whole of the members of the county council are also on the committees, these bodies are often very large. In the case of county Longford, for instance, the county council

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Bean-an-Tighe
Classes.
Paragraph 506.

Itinerant
Instruction.

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Committee.

County
Councils.

Composition of
County Com-
mittees.
Appendix LXII

consists of 24 members, 22 of whom are on the committee of agriculture, and there are 51 outsiders appointed, raising the number of the committee to 73. In the county of Cork the county council numbers 51 members. All of them are members of the committee, and there are 32 outsiders, making the number of the committee 83. The figures as to the rest of the committees of agriculture will be found in the table in the Appendix.

Some criticism has been made upon the unwieldy character of some of these committees.* It must, however, be remembered that in many cases the committees have to deal with counties of very wide extent, and often much intersected by mountains and rivers, so that it is important to have local representation of places not easily accessible. A further consideration is that clergymen can become members only by nomination, and it is unnecessary to say that they form a most important element upon the committees.

61. Under the present organisation, it is these committees which are at present mainly charged with the powers and the duties of administering the Act for the purposes of agriculture generally, including itinerant instruction. In this connection the important provisions of Section 19 (1) (2) (4) and of 16 (6) of the Act of 1899 must be borne in mind. They are as follows:—

Rating Powers.

"19.—(1.) The council of every county (other than a county borough) may, in addition to any existing power, raise equally over the whole of the rural districts comprised in the county, by means of the poor-rate, a sum not exceeding, in any one local financial year, a sum equal to a rate of one penny in the pound on the rateable value of such rural districts at the beginning of that year, and may apply the same for the purposes of agriculture and other rural industries, or for any other purpose for which they are authorised by or in pursuance of this Act to expend money."

"19.—(2.) Notwithstanding anything in the Technical Instruction Acts, 1889 and 1891, the rate raised for the purposes of those Acts in a rural district may, if the county council think fit, be applied under this section for any of the purposes of agriculture and other rural industries not included in the said Acts."

"19.—(4.) No money shall be applied under this section save (a) in accordance with the provisions of a scheme approved by the Department; or (b) for defraying any administrative or incidental expenses incurred, with the approval of the Department, for the purposes of this Act."

"16.—(6.) The Department shall not, in the absence of special considerations, apply or approve of the application of money under this section (other than the capital sums in this section mentioned) to schemes in respect of which aid is not given out of money provided by local authorities or from other local sources."

The "existing power" referred to in Section 19 (1) is contained in the Technical Instruction Acts, 1889 and 1891, which enable a Local Authority to raise a rate for technical or manual instruction not exceeding one penny in the £.

62. No part of the rates raised under the powers above quoted is applied to the salary of the itinerant instructor, although the appointment of the itinerant instructor rests with the local authority, subject to the approval of the Department. The local authority also has power of dismissal. As the instructor is appointed under an annual scheme, his term of office terminates with the scheme, but he may, of course, be re-appointed. The relations thus created between the Department and the local authority are of a somewhat delicate character, and it is our duty to endeavour to ascertain how the system has worked in practice. For this purpose we must go back to the period immediately preceding the establishment of the Department and trace the development of the system.

Itinerant
Instructors.

Two difficulties encountered the Department at the outset. The first of these was to find a sufficient number of men and women competent to act as instructors. The second was to obtain the co-operation of the local authorities, and to arouse sufficient interest in the people for whom the instruction was intended to justify the efforts and the expenditure which would be necessary.

63. The first step taken by the Department was to send about the country pioneer lecturers appointed and paid by the Department itself. A striking instance of the value of lectures of this character came prominently before us, Professor Mason, of the Royal Veterinary College of Ireland, though not on the permanent staff of the Department, has been employed by it to lecture on veterinary subjects in certain parts of Ireland for the last five years, and

Pioneer Lecturers.

1833a.

* Best, 9416-20; McDonald, 4978-82; McGlynn, Monsignor, 7264-70; Mehan, Rev. J., 7076-8; Casey, Rev. W., 5138-91; Carolan, 6661-4; Ewerard, 14681-5; Ruah, 10161-3; Neary, 6940-50.

also as a teacher in the College of Science. On our tour through the West and North of Ireland we found many persons who had had the opportunity of hearing a lecture from Professor Mason, and whatever opinion these persons might have of the merits of the action taken by the Department in other respects, there seemed to be no difference of opinion as to the great value of Professor Mason's lectures. The only complaint was that there were too few of them.* There can be no better test of the appreciation of Professor Mason's work than the audiences which he was able to get together amongst the mountains and bogs of the West of Ireland. One of our number, Mr. Dryden, attended one of these lectures in the neighbourhood of Sligo, and was much impressed with the value of the instruction given, and the appreciation of the subject by the small farmers who attended. The need for instruction of this character and some of the results of the lectures are thus graphically described by Professor Mason :

12290 a.

"When I commenced lecturing five years ago I found the people throughout the country, speaking generally, with a few exceptions, in the most awful state of ignorance: I found they knew practically nothing of the animals they were living by. There were a number of diseases causing terrific losses in different parts of the country, and the most foolish remedies and preventatives were used. I might give, as one instance, there is a disease recognised in a great many parts of Ireland as worm in a cow's tail. And up to the time I started I found the people operating in the most cruel manner on cow's tails for a disease that never existed, and I could only put that down by offering a £10 reward to any man who would give me a specimen of the worm in a tail, and I have not got the worm yet. I found diseases causing tremendous losses, and yet absolutely unsuspected. There was contagious abortion in cattle; I am not able to estimate the loss here, but, roughly speaking, I don't see how the loss could be less than half a million a year. That may be an exaggeration or an understatement, but I put it in this way, there were close on two million milch-cows when I last read the records, or a million and a half, and if you had only one in forty of those affected—I am afraid it runs nearer one in ten—and estimate the loss at £10 a cow, that gives you £200,000, and if I put it very low down there is not less than a quarter of a million lost to the Irish farmer by that disease. In the last week I went over ground that I had travelled five years ago. I met farmers who thanked me for having pointed this out, and to the Department for the leaflets, and I believe the loss is tremendously lessened by the work of the Department. Among other things, the Department caused me to meet a number of instructors at the Cork Exhibition. I got them daily for some time and gave them thorough instruction as far as our scientific information went with regard to that disease. Since then we have advanced a little, and only this year fresh announcements have been made by Professor Bang at Copenhagen. I tried to bring that home to the farmers. There are a number of other diseases causing tremendous loss, red-water, black leg, and various diseases in sheep.

"12294. (*Mr. Dryden*).—Diseases of calves?—Yes; white scour, and joint-evil, lung sickness, and so on with a great many diseases. The farmers really had no knowledge of their animals; they had no knowledge of the proper way to deal with them; they were very largely in the hands, too, of unscrupulous people. Some of the diseases which were due to the fact that the farmers were persuaded to buy absolute rubbish in the way of feeding-stuffs, and one of the things I have done, and the other instructors have done, with the authority of the Department of Agriculture, is, we pointed out to the farmers the way they were robbed. One calf meal was sold at 28s. a cwt., and it was sold broadcast throughout the country. I met with a case yesterday in the Co. Tyrone where a farmer was prosecuted for the amount he owed for that very calf meal. The Department got it analysed, and I think I am oversteating it when I say it was found to contain about 7s. worth of feeding material; the rest was either rubbish, useless, or, in my opinion, more likely to be absolutely injurious. That has been part of the work the Department has authorised me and the other instructors to carry out.

"12295. (*Chairman*).—When you suspect that the feeding stuff is of a bad quality you send it to the Department for analysis?—Not I personally; I go over the whole of Ireland. In Cork, Mr. Carroll, the Secretary of the County Council, visits the various districts. About three weeks ago he visited the various districts with me; while I was lecturing in the district he would go round and collect samples that would be analysed, and whilst I was there a prosecution was made.

"12296. Analysed on the spot?—No; sent up to the Department.

"12297. (*Mr. Dryden*).—What was the result of that?—I believe the feeding-stuffs have very much improved, and I may also add that the Department of Agriculture carried on calves' feeding experiments, and after several years' careful trial they found one calf meal that gave very much better results than any other, and I try to impress on the farmers that instead of buying imported meal they should buy their own meal or try to get the local shopkeepers to make it. I went, in Belfast, to some of the big merchants, and asked what they could do the Department's meal at, and they told me they could make a profit at 10s. 6d. or 11s., and for that the farmers get a meal which contains probably four times the feeding value of the 28s. stuff, with none of the noxious admixtures."

Professor Mason's lectures have been something more than pioneer lectures but, as was the intention of this class of lecture, they have paved the way for the agricultural instructor in dealing with the question of diseases in cattle and sheep, and therefore may be classed under this head. The

* *Cavan*, Clifford, 9684; *Reeves*, 13074-8; *Gabany*, Burke, 6116; *Hynes*, 6300; *Kilbenny*, Connellan, 11313-4; *Lisrine*, Neenan, Rev. J., 7075; *Mayo*, Cardan, 6674; *Sligo*, Flanagan, 7136; *Tipperary*, Crowe, Rev. P., 5723; *Wexford*, Rice, 10496.

pioneer instructor was intended by the Department to fill the gap until the system of agricultural instruction was organised in connection with the county committees.

64. In the first year of the Department's work public lectures were given in the counties of Fermanagh, Kerry and Sligo, at centres selected by the county committees in winter dairying, feeding and management of milk cows, and use of manures. The average attendances in these counties were respectively 65, 40, and 65. These lectures were followed by courses given in the counties of Donegal, Kildare, Cavan, Galway and Tyrone, on poultry keeping and veterinary hygiene. In the next year it was found that the demand for qualified instructors so far exceeded the supply that it was necessary for the Department to provide in a number of counties, free of cost, short courses of lectures on the subjects above mentioned and others of the same character.

"All the pioneer lectures were appreciated and well attended, and none more so than those on veterinary hygiene." To meet the demands for these lectures and for judges at local shows and special inspectors, the Agricultural Board, on August 25, 1903, voted a sum of £4,500.

In 1902-3 about 450 lectures were delivered, the average attendance being 120.

In 1903-4, notwithstanding the fact that, as will be shown presently, the county schemes were in operation and a large number of lectures were given under them, the Department was constantly requisitioned for additional pioneer lectures. During the year they arranged for 225 on veterinary hygiene, 76 on special agricultural subjects, 121 on horticulture, and 40 on flax growing. At these lectures there was an average attendance of 134, those on veterinary hygiene being specially popular.

In 1904-5, the further development of the county schemes reduced the demand for pioneer lectures, but, notwithstanding, 250 lectures were given in veterinary hygiene, which continued to create "great interest," 35 in flax cultivation, 57 in horticulture, 26 on bee-keeping, and 20 on agricultural subjects.

65. We turn now to the joint action of the Department and the local authorities represented by the statutory committees above described in regard to itinerant instruction.

The late summer of 1900 may be taken as the period when the active operations of the Department commenced. Immediately after Professor Campbell's appointment as head of the Agricultural Branch of the Department, his first duty and that of the chief inspector of that Branch, was to attend meetings of the county councils and committees, explaining the provisions of the Act of 1899, and discussing the best mode of putting these provisions into operation. It is stated in the Report for 1900-1 that practically all the county councils and urban councils or technical instruction committees had been visited by the Department's officers—some of them many times—and numerous personal conferences took place between the officials of the Department in Dublin and representatives of local committees. The Department adopted the view that arrangements of this nature were far better settled by personal conference than by official correspondence. It is due to the Department to say that the evidence given before us by the great majority of the representatives of the local authorities throughout the counties showed that the relations between the Department and the local authorities, with a very few exceptions, and those chiefly of a temporary nature, have, throughout the whole period during which the Act has been in force, been of a most cordial and satisfactory character. The evidence appears to us not only to reflect great credit on the administration of the Act both by the central and local authorities, but also to show that all those concerned in the administration of the Act of 1899 recognised that it afforded the most hopeful and powerful means of working great improvements in the condition both of the different localities and of the country at large. Whatever results may ultimately be reached, we cannot but regard the evidence which has been laid before us, proving the cordial co-operation of local bodies, comprising persons of wide differences in political opinions and in creed, with a central body, as fraught with great promise for the future of Ireland.

Development of System.
First Annual Report, p. 27.

Second Annual Report, p. 42.

Third Annual Report, p. 24.

Fourth Annual Report, p. 58.

Fifth Annual Report, p. 23.

Employment of Instructors by Local Authorities.

First Annual Report, p. 18.

See Subject Index; County and Urban District Committees.

Rate for agricultural purposes.

66. The first step taken by the county councils was that, in the first financial year, every local authority in Ireland resolved to raise a rate for the purposes of the Act under the powers given to them.

Joint Fund.

67. The proceeds of these rates, together with the Department's contribution in each case to schemes, under section 16 (6) of the Act, constitute what will hereafter be called the "joint fund." There is no definite proportion fixed by the Act. The Department is precluded, "in the absence of special considerations," from applying its endowment fund to schemes "in respect of which aid is not given out of money provided by local authorities or from other sources."

We are dealing in this part of the Report with so much of the schemes only as relates to agricultural education. The provisions of the schemes, other than those relating to agricultural education, belong to a later portion of our subject.

Appendix XXXIV.

County Schemes.

68. The existing scheme of instruction in agriculture is set out in the Appendix. The minutes of the Agricultural Board show that the practice has been in each year to lay before the Board, prior to the termination of the agricultural year on September 30, the schemes of instruction for the ensuing year, and to obtain the approval of the Board. Such modifications as experience shows to be required, are from time to time made in these schemes. Besides the general scheme for instruction in agriculture, there are also separate schemes for poultry-keeping, horticulture, bee-keeping, and butter-making. In 1905 the estimates for the expenditure on schemes and travelling expenses of instructors were as follows:—

	Agriculture.	Poultry.	Horticulture and Bee-keeping.	Butter.
Salaries,	£ 7,500	£ 3,000	£ 1,800	£ 1,600
Travelling Expenses,	2,000	2,000	1,300	600

Appointment of Instructors.

Campbell, 1905.

69. The leading feature of all the schemes is that the appointment of the various instructors is in the hands of the local authority subject to the approval of the Department. The local authorities submit to the Department the names of the persons who have applied, in response to advertisement or otherwise. The Department examines the qualifications stated in the applications, or examines candidates whose record is insufficient, and transmits to the committee a list giving the names of the candidates to be regarded as qualified for the post. From among these the committee makes the appointment. The scheme fixes the maximum salary of the instructor, and his appointment is terminable by three months' notice on either side. The salary is payable by the Department. The duties of the agricultural instructor are to deliver courses of lectures, to conduct experiments and demonstrations, to advise farmers both by letter and verbally, to report to the Department and the county committee, and generally to give his whole time to the work, and to do all in his power to further the interests of agriculture in the county. *Mutatis mutandis*, the duties of the instructors in horticulture, butter-making, poultry, and bee-keeping are similarly defined. The various schemes are set out in the Appendix.

It is the duty of the county committee to select the centres at which the lectures will be given, and to appoint a local committee to make the necessary arrangements. The lectures are to be held in rural centres, and towns and villages are to be avoided. The sanction of the Department must be obtained before the scheme is put in force by any county committee.

Local Committees.

Page 145.

Schemes submitted to Local Authorities.

70. The appointment and organisation of Local Committees is a most important feature in aiding the working of the Act, and in the case of many counties urgently requires further development. We call attention to the practice in King's county, stated in the Memorandum attached to the Report, where the system of Local Committees appears to be most fully developed.

71. The practice is for these schemes to be circulated every year to the county committees, who make suggestions which are considered and frequently acted on by the Department. In reply to the criticism on the Department's action urged by some witnesses that the schemes are "cast-iron" and that

they are forced upon the county committees by the Department,* Professor Campbell points out that "the first year's schemes were drawn up after a long period of initial conference with the county committees, and that in every year since an opportunity has been given to the county committees of expressing their views on the working of these schemes." These observations apply both to the educational schemes now under consideration and to the live stock, horse-breeding, and other schemes, which will be dealt with in the next part of this Report.

15977.

Campbell, 15977.

The four provinces of Ireland are each visited by one of the four inspectors of the Agricultural Branch of the Department, who supervises generally the administration of the county schemes in the province.

The list set out in the Appendix gives the present number of instructors acting in the various counties in Ireland. It will be seen that only two counties are without instructors—Dublin and Donegal.

Appendix XXXIII.

72. The case of Donegal is somewhat peculiar. In the early stages of the operations of the Department no objection was made to the appointment of instructors who were natives of or residents in the counties in which they worked. Experience, however, proved that this system was open to objection, and in the scheme of 1904-5 there appeared for the first time the following proviso:—"In the case of new appointments no person shall be eligible for an instructorship in the county of which he is a native, or in which he resides permanently." The reasons for the adoption of this rule are given by Professor Campbell:—

Difficulties in Donegal.

"In the first place, natives of the county are too well known to their neighbours to be effective teachers; secondly, the whole success of the scheme depends upon having an officer who is constantly moving about, and visiting farmers as well as giving lectures in the evening; in some cases where the instructor had his or her home in the county there was a tendency to remain at home all day and merely act as lecturer and do no itinerant work. The fact that the salary under this scheme covers the cost of maintenance has, of course, a strong tendency to induce an instructor who is a native of the county to be always at his or her home. Naturally there is no expense there, but by far the greatest objection to the employment of instructors in their own counties is the fact that these officers have a considerable amount of patronage to bestow. Under the agricultural scheme the officer has often to select the person on whose farm the demonstrations and experiments are to be carried out, and as there are considerable sums spent on seeds and manures, it is a consideration to a small occupier to get this draft out of public funds. Under the poultry scheme premiums of £3 are given to persons, usually selected by the instructor, who distribute eggs from a flock of birds who have to be approved of by the instructor, and under the horticultural scheme there are demonstration plots for which trees and seeds are supplied out of public funds. That an instructor should exercise this patronage without being subjected to undue pressure from his friends, relatives, and supporters who desire these premiums, manures, seeds and prizes is more than could be expected. Accordingly the Department made it a rule that these instructors should not be natives of, or resident in, the counties in which they work."

1339

The Department appears to have acted on the rule before it was actually embodied in the scheme for 1904-5, and in the spring of 1904 declined to approve of the appointment of an instructress submitted by the Donegal county committee on this ground. The Donegal committee apparently were not aware of the existence of the rule or practice of the Department, and much resented the action taken. They went so far as to decline to appoint any instructors at all, and the county is still without instructors under the schemes in agriculture, poultry-keeping, butter-making, and horticulture.

The county has, however, adopted other schemes, which are said to be working well. It must be remembered that the rule in question has been accepted in every other county in Ireland, with, perhaps, the exception of Limerick—that it had been passed by the Agricultural Board—that all the Irish counties have opportunities every year of suggesting alterations in the

1442.

* *Armagh*, Houston, 8457-8; *Donegal*, McGlynn, Monsignor, 7185; *Doherty*, Rev. J., 7296-302, 7399; *Down*, Robb, 9140-8; *Dublin*, Mooney, 11670-6; *Galway*, Daly, 6158-74; *MDonnell*, 6297; *Glynn*, 5941-53; *Fogarty*, 4044-54, 6069-130 A; *Burke*, 6068; *Reddingham*, 6290; *Kildenny*, Butler, 11358; *Brennan*, 11337; *Lalorin*, Keane, 6833; *Limerick*, Vaughan, 5703; *Lee*, Rev. T., 5398-435; *Hallinan*, Monsignor (App. LVI.); *Cassidy*, Rev. W., 5153, 5157-8; *Mays*, Carolan, 6658; *Huggins*, 6186-91; *Monaghan*, McKenna, Rev. E., 9683-86; *Toal*, 10039; *Daly* (App. LIX.); *Shops*, Oughton, 6963-72; *Flanagan*, 7124-5, 7132-3; *Tipperary*, O'Ryan, 14321; *Widdow*, Cogan, 11792.

rule, or of raising the question in the Council of Agriculture, or of refusing the scheme when it is submitted to them. We are told that the rule, in fact, meets with the general approval of the county authorities, and, so far as the question has arisen, this appears to have been the general result of the evidence before us. On the other hand, it is stated that a circular having been issued by the Donegal county council on August 8, 1904, inviting the opinions of all the counties in Ireland on the point, eleven counties supported the view taken by county Donegal. It may be that in time, when there is a larger supply of instructors, the rule may with advantage be modified, so as to treat, separately, distinct districts of a large and mountainous county like Donegal. In the meantime, we cannot say that the practice of the Department is unreasonable, though it is to be regretted that the committee seem not to have been aware of the view taken by the Department before making the appointment above referred to. We think the refusal of the county committee to appoint instructors, under the circumstances, is to be regretted.

73. Tables are given in the Appendix showing year by year the increase in the number of counties employing instructors in agriculture, poultry, bee-keeping, and butter-making. The increase, we are told, would have been much more rapid if it had not been for the difficulty of obtaining properly qualified instructors. Many county committees appear to spare no pains in endeavouring to get the best men available for these important posts, and if they cannot find them in Ireland, they advertise in England and Scotland. The Department has, it seems, been much criticised for having imported instructors from England and Scotland. The figures, however, given us show that there is no foundation for this criticism. It will be remembered that the Department tests the qualification of applicants for these posts. The local authority selects from amongst the persons found qualified and the Department approves. It appears that up to June, 1906, twenty-nine Irish candidates for the post of agricultural instructor had presented themselves; of these twenty-eight had passed, and all of them obtained appointments. Sixty persons had applied from England and Scotland; of these, forty-five were rejected by the Department, leaving fifteen eligible for appointments. Of these fifteen, six only were appointed to posts by the county committees. Of the whole body of instructors, numbering 102, 96 are Irish, and have almost all been trained by the Department. The Department, in fact, uses its influence to induce county committees to wait for trained Irishmen rather than import instructors, and, indeed, it is in the interests of the training schools that Irish applicants should be appointed in preference to persons trained elsewhere. The criticism above referred to, therefore, appears to have no foundation in fact.

74. It is important, in dealing both with the system of itinerant instruction and the training carried on at local centres, to consider the relation of the work of the Department with primary education under the National Commissioners. It does not fall within our province to discuss the methods or results of primary education in Ireland, except so far as concerns the relation between primary and agricultural education. This question is of still greater importance in relation to technical education, and will be fully discussed in that part of the Report which deals with this branch of our Reference.

It will be remembered that previous to the Act of 1899 the National Commissioners were the only body charged in any way with agricultural education. It was this body which administered the Albert and the Munster Institutions.

Formerly, as has been already pointed out, teachers were trained in the model farm at Glasnevin for the purpose of qualifying to give a course of practical instruction in agricultural schools. This plan is stated to have been adopted with positive enthusiasm, and was approved of by the Devon Commission in 1843, who recommended the establishment of special agricultural schools. A further step was taken by the appointment in 1848 of itinerant instructors by the Lord Lieutenant for the purpose of giving advice and assistance to farmers. Twenty model farms were established in various parts of the country by the National Board, and poor law guardians were aided to encourage agricultural instruction in the workhouses.

75. These model farms, however, appear not to have succeeded, and the Government did not favour the scheme. Sir Patrick Keenan, in a letter already referred to, says of the whole system, "It had been proscribed by Chief Secretary after Chief Secretary, and had at all times to encounter the fiercest hostility of the Treasury." Whatever the cause the system failed.

Model Farms.

Paragraph 1.

The following is the summary of its history given by the present Resident Commissioner of the National Board, Dr. Starkie :—

"We have had agricultural model schools under the Commissioners' control, agricultural schools under local control, agricultural classes, school farms, and school gardens ever since 1857. This system of teaching agriculture, I believe, was recommended by the Devon Commission, and a very great deal of money was spent by the National Board upon it, but the results achieved were extremely small, and the Treasury set their face against such expenditure; in fact, killed it. They insisted from 1860 down that all these places should be suppressed, and in the end, in 1900, nothing was left except school farms and school gardens. The school farms were a complete failure. I was very glad, indeed, that they were suppressed. They were sometimes up to 70 acres, and the children were taken out on certain days to dig and plant, and our experience was that they learned to work extremely little. They learned to work mechanically without grasping any of the principles of agriculture or any of the sciences underlying it. The same thing might be said, but to a less degree, about the school gardens. Indeed they might be said to have been fairly successful. The children were taken out of school into these very small plots and taught to plant flowers and work of that kind, but all the same they were as a rule quite ignorant of the reasons for anything they did, any of the sciences underlying it, and the consequence was that in 1898, the Commission on Manual and Technical Instruction condemned the whole system."

1871.

Dr. Starkie goes on to quote from the revised programme of 1903 to explain the present system of instruction of this character in primary schools :—

"The programme provides alternative courses in object lessons and elementary science, but in most of the rural National schools it would be desirable that courses embracing the principles of horticulture and agriculture should be adopted." On page 23 the Commissioners think it necessary to remark that by the courses in elementary science they do not wish to train electricians, agriculturists, &c.; but they wish to give all pupils useful instruction and the possible future electrician or agriculturist such a knowledge of the great natural principles underlying his profession as will enable him to pursue it with success in after life. The great end teachers should endeavour to secure in connection with elementary science is to produce the scientific habit of research, and to impress the leading scientific principles upon the nascent intelligence by observation and simple experiment on the part of the pupils, and by plain expository and practical illustration on the part of the teacher. As a help to instruction in Course II., every school should, whenever possible, have a small plot of ground as a garden. If this is not possible, garden boxes should be placed in the windows, and be planted with the simpler flowers, which could be used for illustrating the lessons. The gardens and boxes would, moreover, make the schools more cheerful and attractive to the children, and would aid largely in the development of artistic taste and a love of Nature." In the present programme we have gone a good deal farther. We have actually a course in the principles underlying agriculture, plant life; it is a course for object lessons and also in connection with elementary science. We say that in rural schools a certain time should be given every week to observing the phenomena of the weather and facts connected with plant life. I don't think in National Schools we can go farther than that; a National School is not a place to teach agriculture."

76. Later in his evidence, in answer to questions as to the desirability of establishing school gardens and a system of teaching in connection with these gardens, Dr. Starkie, while expressing a favourable opinion on such a plan, strongly deprecates it on the lines of the system which was abolished in 1900, when the instruction was given by the teacher, "who has so much other work to do." He would approve of such instruction being given by the instructor of the county committee without cost to the National Board. He is sure that the Board would accept such a proposal "with avidity."

School Gardens.

1868.

1845.

It will be seen from the above quotations from Dr. Starkie's evidence, that the question which at the present time is most pressing for a solution is whether or not it is desirable that the Department should take steps in connection and by arrangement with the National Board to establish school gardens, under the supervision of the county horticultural instructor. The question of establishing farms in connection with schools has few advocates. One important witness, Mr. H. Doran, the chief agricultural officer of the Congested Districts Board, advocated this system in the congested districts. We reserve our observations on this till we come to deal specially with the congested districts.

Paragraph 13E.

On the other hand, numerous witnesses strongly advocate the establishment of school gardens on the lines above indicated, and it is clear that many

county authorities are anxious that this step should be taken.* Professor Campbell, while cordially approving of school gardens in what might be called nature study in elementary schools, deprecates any attempt to teach boys of 12 or 13 technical horticulture, when, he says, "you do that, it degenerates into simple reading of a text-book on the subject, and is not really effective."

At the Albert Institution, Glasnevin, there are a number of school gardens laid out and cultivated as models with a view to training students, "so that when these men become teachers under the county schemes, they may be able to give instruction in school gardens in connection with such schools as we are allowed to enter."

The men who qualified at the Albert Institution at Glasnevin, according to the evidence of Mr. Moore, Keeper of the Botanical Gardens at Dublin, now under the Department, are all, with two exceptions, employed either by the Department or as county instructors. Of every one of these in employment he states "we have heard a good account." According to the latest returns there are twenty-three counties in Ireland which have the services of horticultural instructors. Mr. Moore, however, states with regret that recently the number of candidates applying for instruction at the Albert Institution appears to be falling off.

It seems probable that some difficulty may arise as to the multiplicity of the duties cast upon the horticultural instructor, and the large areas which he has to serve. If the system of school gardens is developed Professor Campbell has grave doubts whether the county instructor can possibly, consistently with his other duties, supervise them. His primary duty is to give instruction, to advise and assist farmers at their own homes and gardens, and the supervision of experimental plots and gardens. How the whole system can best be organised, how the services of an adequate number of sufficiently trained men can be retained, is one of the problems which cannot be said to be solved as yet. In this connection it should be mentioned that instruction in bee-keeping has lately been added, in many cases, to the duties of the horticultural instructor, and that most of these instructors are now qualified to give instruction in that subject.

Other functions of Instructors.

77. The functions of the instructors are not wholly educational. Indeed, it is difficult to draw any very distinct line between their educational functions and their employment in giving assistance to agriculture other than by educational methods. We mention briefly some of their duties which appear to be of a sufficiently educational character to be appropriately dealt with in this part, and we shall refer to certain other functions which they discharge under the next head.

Experiments and Demonstrations.

One of the functions of the agricultural instructor under the schemes is to "conduct such experiments and demonstrations as may be approved by the Department, and to select suitable land for the purpose." The horticultural instructor has similar duties.

There is a difference between the demonstrations and the experiments conducted by the agricultural instructor. In the former case the system is to arrange with a farmer to cultivate for him a single plot of land.

"You go to the farmer and say 'Give me half that field and I will manure it for you or sow it with a certain kind of seed for you, and the whole country shall see the results.' They stick up a placard, 'This field is manured by so and so.' There is no special attempt made to estimate the produce at all; the farmer sees a plot and he says, 'That was treated with basic slag.' He sees the part beside it 'that was not,' and in the same way, 'This is the latest variety of oats,' and so on. And he sees for himself whether this is a good variety of oats or not, and if it is good he probably will invest his money in it another year, and if it is bad, he sees the result."

Thus the farmer accepts and uses at his own risk for these plots the seeds and manures supplied by the Department. There seems to be no difficulty in making this arrangement with as many farmers as are wanted. No compensation is paid in the case of failure. The object aimed at is purely educational, and the farmer is quite willing to take the risk. No precise records of the results of the demonstration are made. The object is by a simple

* Barry, Rev. R., 11603-14; Bolger, 10670-9; Boyle, 10663, 10670-7; Burke, 6129; Cogan, 11676; Doyle, Cane, 11138-9; Elphin, Bishop of, 3499; Emly, 3347-53; Keller, Monaghan, 4633-6; Malone, 15468-62; McDonald, 4923-6; Neenan, Rev. J., 7084; Montague, 5588-7; Murphy, 8543; O'Kelly, 14285; Roberts, 4496-502.

and inexpensive method to give the farmer practical experience of the results of special kinds of seeds and special modes of manuring the land, and to encourage interest in the neighbourhood. Experiments, on the other hand, which are conducted by the agricultural instructor are more costly. They are conducted in accordance with the memorandum set out in the Appendix at the cost of the Department. The nature of these experiments, the method employed, and the high claim made for the great utility of the results attained, are best expressed in Professor's Campbell's own words:—

Appendix XXXV.

"Now, with regard to these field experiments, I explained that the county instructor conducts them on behalf of the Department and collects the results, and they are all compared and published from this office. The plan of these experiments is set out in the printed memorandum, which I will submit as evidence. A very great deal of time and money have been spent on similar experiments in other countries, where several local authorities or agricultural institutions are engaged in such work, and where each devised and carried out its own set of experiments without any attempt at co-ordination. The result has been the compilation of an enormous mass of figures, from which no general results can be drawn owing to the want of uniformity in the plan of experiments. When taking up similar work in Ireland I determined to guard against a like result. Accordingly the schemes devised in 1901 have been repeated unchanged year by year in a constantly increasing number of counties, and we are now able to place before the farmers of Ireland a series of figures in which I may be pardoned if I feel some pride. These experiments are of a simple nature intended to teach in the most emphatic manner some of the most elementary, yet badly understood, principles of manures and manuring. Their results have been in each year embodied in leaflets which have been distributed over the country, and they have also formed the subjects of a series of lectures by the itinerant agricultural instructors. I am firmly convinced that the improvement that has taken place in the use and purchase of manures, in recent years, alone justifies every penny that has been spent on county agricultural instruction. I shall not attempt to explain the principles on which these experiments are based, or the results which have been arrived at. It would require a series of lectures to do justice to the subject. Suffice it to say, that the results are most conclusive, and will form a standard of reference for many years to come. I may say that manure manufacturers are now making up their blends in accordance with the results of these experiments. It is not claimed that they cover the whole ground, but what has been attempted has been done thoroughly and completely. It is now intended to start another series which will be carried out in the same manner, but which will have for its object the solution of a different set of problems. The experiments already made cover the principal crops of the farm, viz., oats, potatoes, mangels, turnips, and hay. I submit herewith the leaflets showing the results of the experiments in 1905. You will remember I referred to demonstrations before. The demonstrations are cheap, easily done, and you want them in every locality. The experiments are costly, and we do not attempt too many of them, 432 last year."

1843.

Contrasting the method adopted in Ireland with that of England and other countries, he says that in England:—

"You could get experiments of the same character, but every institution and county authority has its own set, and you cannot bring them all together and boil them down to one issue; it shows the advantage of a central authority, keeping in touch with their work, and illustrates the difference between the system we adopt in Ireland and the system adopted in England and Scotland. There each local authority gets its grant and goes its own way."

1848.

78. The practice of distributing information and advice on agricultural matters by means of leaflets has attained very large proportions. Last year (1905-6) there were about 1,600,000 distributed. The Department has a "mailing list" of persons in all parts of Ireland, and receives about 30 applications a day. We had much evidence before us indicating the usefulness and appreciation of this method of agricultural instruction.

Leaflets.

Adams, 2297-4.

79. One of the principal functions of the itinerant instructors is to advise farmers and their families on agricultural questions. They are very freely resorted to. In 1905-6 there were no less than 25,000 inquiries addressed to the instructors in writing on these matters. It is, moreover, the constant practice of the farmer to ask orally for advice. With a larger supply of qualified teachers this advising work might be greatly increased.

1475.

Advice.

1489.

80. So far as the educational aspect of the question is concerned, what has been said as to itinerant instruction in agriculture and horticulture applies generally to itinerant instruction in butter-making, poultry-keeping, and bee-keeping. Instruction in butter-making and poultry-keeping is carried on almost entirely by instructresses who have been trained at the Munster Institute. The production of butter in Ireland is either by dairying carried on at the farmer's house, or in creameries. The latter will be discussed in the following head of this Report. It is with the home dairying that the teacher has to deal.

Home Dairying.

1534.

1499.

Paragraph 108.

1251.

The work of organising instruction in this matter has now been entirely delegated to county committees. The practice is to form classes for practical

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butter-making, consisting of twelve girls each. The county committee furnish a sufficient equipment for this number. Each class is instructed for a period of from two to four weeks. There are now twenty-four counties in Ireland which have adopted this method of dairying instruction.

The table set out below gives an idea of the rate at which the system of instruction in home butter-making has progressed:—

In 1900-1	one teacher was appointed by	1 county.
1901-2	"	4 counties.
1902-3	"	11 "
1903-4	"	18 "
1904-5	"	22 "
1905-6	"	24 "

Poultry-keeping.

Appendix V.

Campbell, 1492.

81. With regard to instruction in poultry-keeping the numbers of teachers appointed by the county authority in the same years were 4, 12, 22, 32, 30, 30.

"The duty of the instructor in poultry-keeping, who is usually a lady—who having been found impossible to get young men in Ireland to give attention to this industry—comprises the following:—To deliver courses of lectures on poultry-keeping, including the selection of breeds, the hatching and rearing of chickens, the feeding and housing of poultry, and the marketing of the produce; to give demonstrations and lessons on the treatment of common diseases, such as gapes, &c., on the cramming of fowls, and on the plucking, trussing, and preparation of poultry for market, and on the grading and packing of eggs; to visit poultry runs, and give such practical advice as may be desired by poultry-keepers, to inspect the egg distribution and turkey stations referred to in classes 11 and 13, to report to the Department and to the county committee regarding the progress of his or her work either weekly or otherwise as may be required, and generally to give his or her whole time towards promoting improvement in poultry-keeping in the county."

It is stated that during the year 1904-5, 2,662 meetings were held, the average attendance at each being sixty.

Bee-keeping.

Appendix XXXIII.

82. Instruction in bee-keeping is made part of the duty of the horticultural instructor, but there are some counties, as will be seen from the list in the Appendix, which have a separate instructor for this purpose.

General Observations.

83. We have now considered the working of the county schemes and the joint action of the central and local authority in relation to itinerant instruction. We shall have to return to this subject when we come to consider the assistance rendered to agriculture by the instructors under the county schemes by methods other than those which can be classed as educational.

It must be borne in mind that the various instructors are not only the servants of the committees for purposes of giving instruction in agriculture and other subjects, but are also "the eyes and ears of the Department" throughout the country, that it is part of their duty to keep the Department informed on the condition of agriculture in their districts and of any special requirements.

The principal objections which have been made in evidence to the system of itinerant instruction are that, in some cases, it is not sufficiently practical; that the lecturer often talks over the heads of his audience, and that theoretical teaching is far less useful than practical demonstration, especially when it takes the form of showing how an existing farm can be worked to profit.* In regard to these and similar criticisms, it is obvious that all itinerant lecturers cannot be equally well fitted to give instruction orally. It is manifest from the account above given that the Department has done what lies in its power to make the teaching of the instructors of as practical a character as possible. Professor Campbell's observations in this connection, referred to in the margin, are worthy of attention. A further objection which has been taken is that the agricultural and horticultural instructor has more to do and a greater extent of ground to cover than is reasonably practicable, especially in the wilder parts of Ireland, where the different parts of the counties are separated by mountains, bogs, and rivers. This objection was strongly urged by Mr. H. Doran, of the Congested Districts Board, who would prefer to substitute for the system of itinerant instruction, a system under which a successful farmer of intelligence in a district should, while

* Bloem, Rev. M. 5275; McInerney, 5856; Keller, Monogr., 4627; Belger, 10580, 10589; O'Kelly, 14290-72; Archdale, 8331-9; Hall, 8269-70; Mehan, 9768-16; Coughlan, 10987-9; Rice, 10502-5; Halpin, 13705; Daly (App. LIX.); Whelan (App. LVIII.).

continuing the work of his farm, be employed as the local instructor. We shall discuss this proposal hereafter. Very few witnesses have taken the line that farmers cannot be taught by the instructors anything which they do not know already. A far more general ground of complaint has been that a sufficient number of qualified instructors cannot be obtained; that counties have had to wait unduly long for the kind of man they want, or have had to put up with inferior men. The justice of this complaint is admitted by the Department, which can only reply that it is making every effort to supply the wants of the counties with instructors trained in Ireland; that it considers it of vital importance that the standard of qualification should be kept high; that it is turning out from the College of Science and the Munster Institute every year an increasing number of trained instructors; and before we closed our sittings, Professor Campbell was able to say that this year every county in Ireland, except the counties of Donegal and Dublin, has been provided with a fully trained agricultural instructor.

Paragraph 123.

15189.

2. ASSISTANCE TO AGRICULTURE OTHERWISE THAN BY EDUCATIONAL METHODS.

84. When the Department was first established certain schemes were in existence which had been adopted by the Royal Dublin Society for the improvement of breeds of horses and cattle at a cost of £5,000 per annum of money paid out of the Local Taxation Account. Arrangements were made with the Royal Dublin Society to transfer this sum to the Department, so that all live stock schemes might for the future be under one authority. This arrangement was subsequently confirmed by Parliament.

Royal Dublin Society

Agriculture and
Technical Instruction
(Ireland) No. 2, Act,
1892.

(a) COUNTY SCHEMES.

85. The first step taken by the Department was to appoint two Advisory Committees—one for horse-breeding and one for cattle and swine. It was thought best to follow as closely as possible the methods adopted by the Royal Dublin Society which were already understood. In November, 1900, the Agricultural Board, on consideration of a report from the Advisory Committee, adopted a scheme for encouraging improvement in the breeds of cattle. It provided that the sum to be spent by the Department on the purposes of the scheme should depend on the amount raised locally; that the joint fund consisting of the money provided from rates and the grant from the Department should, as far as possible, be administered by county committees. The money was to be spent chiefly in providing premiums for selected bulls—£8 for KERRIES and Dexters, and of £12 for other selected breeds. Only bulls entered in or eligible for entry in their respective Herd-Books were to be selected. The first scheme provided only for premiums for yearling bulls; but if a sufficient number of yearling bulls were not forthcoming two-year-old bulls might be chosen. The scheme contained provisions as to the number of services, and for the amount of the service fee, which varied according to valuation. The Department reserved the right to brand or mark the bulls, and to inspect them from time to time.

Advisory
Committees
Campbell 1949.

The Agricultural Board voted a sum of £4,000 for the purposes of the scheme in 1901. The scheme was adopted in that year by all the county committees except two. Since the first year the scheme has been adopted by every county in Ireland.

1640.

86. The practice has been for the live stock and other schemes to be revised each year. Each county committee is asked for its suggestions on the working of the scheme of the previous year. Their recommendations, Professor Campbell tells us, are carefully considered by the Advisory Committee, and many of them have been adopted, and embodied from time to time in schemes. We have heard in different parts of Ireland some complaints of arbitrary treatment by the Department as regards these schemes, and of inattention to local requirements*. We have not, however, been able to elicit any substantial proof sufficient to justify a charge of this nature against the Department. There have no doubt in individual cases been

Live Stock
SchemesGen. Sec.
Campbell, 1283, 1940.

* *Naas*, 8487-8; *McGlyn*, *Monroe*, 7185; *Baldy*, 5040-8; *Monroe*, 11870-8; *Fennerty*, 4944-54, 5003-1304, *Berke*, 6058; *Baldy*, 11258; *Kearney*, 6332; *Farquhar*, 5703; *Crosby*, 9439; *Higgins*, 6093-91; *Toul*, 10089; *Daly* (App. LIX); *Flanagan*, 7124-5; *O'Ryan*, 14321; *Daly*, 6158-74; *McDermott*, 6397; *Reynolds*, 11237.

differences of opinion, the more important of which are indicated in the course of this Report, and in some, though in surprisingly few cases, there has been a prejudice against methods introduced by the Department, but the evidence appears to us to prove conclusively that the claim made by Professor Campbell that the Department consults, and, as far as possible, meets, the wishes of the various localities, is justified.

The live stock scheme of 1901 was modified in the manner above indicated year by year. We print in the Appendix a copy of the model Scheme of 1906. The principal changes in this scheme, as compared with that of 1901, were that bulls were eligible for premiums up to the age of four years—that the amount of premium was raised to £15, except that in the case of certain classes of bulls adapted to special parts of the country, the premium was £10. The number of services, at a uniform fee of 1s. each, was 30, in the case of yearling premium bulls, and in the case of all others was to be 40.

Working of the Bull Scheme

87. The scheme is actually worked in the following manner:—The county committee first determine the breeds for which they will offer premiums and the number of premiums for bulls which are to be offered in the county. These premiums of £15 each are paid to the owners of the bulls which are selected as eligible for a premium. The practice is for the inspector of the Department to attend the principal shows held in the spring at Dublin, Belfast, and Londonderry. He inspects the bulls offered for sale, and selects those which come up to the required standard. A card or docket is put upon the stall of every selected bull. Sales in England and Scotland are also attended. It is not practicable to carry out the card system elsewhere than in Ireland, but the intending Irish purchasers who attend these sales receive the advice and assistance of the Department's Inspector, and are informed of the animals which are considered fit for premiums.

The county committees select the persons who are entitled to apply to be allowed to purchase a premium bull. It was not at first seen by the committees that the purchaser of the bull should not be one of the poorest class of farmers. A poor farmer would not be able to feed or keep in proper condition a high-class bull. This is now generally understood and the persons selected as entitled to purchase a premium bull and get the premium are generally fairly well to do. The Department also makes, when required, a loan to the farmer to enable him to purchase the bull. The average price for a premium bull appears to be about £40 or £45. The loan from the Department is usually about two-thirds of the price, so that if a farmer bought a bull for £45 he would pay £15, and receive from the Department a loan of £30 which is repaid by two premiums of £15 each. This system is said to work exceedingly well. Several witnesses criticised the method adopted on the ground that the selection and notification of bulls for premiums in the way above described increases their price.* This may, to some extent, be true, but on the other hand the farmer would not buy the bull at all merely on his own judgment, and in the uncertainty whether the bull would be entitled to a premium or not. On the whole the experience of the Department and the general acceptance and approval of the scheme by the counties, with some exceptions, go far to justify the conclusion, that the system both as regards the amount of premium and the method by which it is awarded has worked satisfactorily.

A supplemental scheme is carried out by the Department in the poorer districts in Ireland. This will be described and discussed under the head of our Report which deals with the special methods adopted in Congested Districts.

Appendix X.

Proposed restriction on inferior bulls.

88. It will be seen from the table given in the Appendix that under the system above described the county committees had placed in the various districts 350 premium bulls in 1901; 424 premium bulls in 1902; 618 premium bulls in 1903; 734 premium bulls in 1904; 795 premium bulls in 1905; and 829 premium bulls in 1906. Although these figures point to the

* Burke, 6107-13; Cliford, 9908-24; Cogan, 11883-71; Collicy, 7006-10; Corbett, 4338-45; Hall, 8264-5; Higgins, 6515; Kennedy, 4018-20; Melvin, 6495; M'Quaid, 9596-606; O'Loughlin, 5476, 5486.

successful working of the scheme, when it is remembered that it is estimated that there are in Ireland about 17,000 bulls, many of them of a very inferior type, and that there is still a very great deal of indiscriminate use of such bulls, it is obvious that there is much to be done before it can be said that cattle breeding in Ireland is on a thoroughly satisfactory footing. The evidence given before us shows that so strongly and widely is this opinion held, that it is not improbable that measures of greatly increased stringency may be demanded by public opinion in the direction of restricting compulsorily the use of bulls which are not licensed by the Department or some public authority.* On the 16th May, 1906, the Council of Agriculture passed a strong resolution to this effect. It has been felt hitherto that the time is hardly ripe, and the condition of a large proportion of the agricultural population of Ireland hardly sufficiently advanced to justify compulsory action of the nature desired. But the fact that there should be a widespread feeling of the importance of dealing with this question by further legislation, and the existence of local bodies all over the country, through whom this feeling can find expression, appear to us to be very material for the present purpose, which is to endeavour, not to discuss or determine what particular action in reference to any special question relating to agricultural development is or is not desirable, but to estimate the merits of the constitution set up by the Act of 1899, and of the working of the various authorities to whose care the development of Irish agriculture is entrusted.

89. The principal breeds of cattle which come under the system above described are the Shorthorn, the Aberdeen Angus, and the Hereford. The Shorthorn, it will be seen, very largely exceed in numbers all the other breeds put together. There are other breeds specially adapted for the more mountainous parts of the country. They will be referred to hereafter. The live stock scheme as hitherto worked has been directed mainly to the improvement of Irish store cattle, and not to the improvement of milking breeds, though this latter object has not been lost sight of. It is claimed on behalf of the Department that the large sales of Irish cattle in England and Scotland show "that there has been an immense improvement effected in the store cattle in Ireland." We have endeavoured to test this claim by reference to some of the best known and largest dealers in England and Scotland, and we print in the Appendix the answers we have received. These appear to bear out the view that there has been a marked improvement of late years in the quality of Irish stock in English and Scotch markets. How much of this can be directly attributed to the action of the Department and how much to other agencies such as the Royal Dublin Society and the Congested Districts Board it is difficult to say; but the evidence appears to us to show that there has been unmistakable progress under the operations of the Department.

90. Professor Campbell is of opinion that the progress would have proceeded at double the rate if the Irish farmer could be persuaded to keep his best heifers for breeding purposes, "but he, unfortunately, will sell a good heifer." The Department incurred some charge of unduly dictating to county committees by reason of its endeavours to check the exodus of the best heifers by pressing the adoption of a prize system for heifers at country shows, and in order to avoid friction with county committees gave up this line of action. On the other hand it has been severely criticised in the county of Limerick and elsewhere, for not adopting at an early stage measures to restrict the use of premium bulls to the better class of cows. The Council of Agriculture, in November, 1905, passed a resolution in favour of taking steps to improve the milking qualities of cattle, and after full consideration of the question by the Advisory Committee a new scheme has been issued by which it is proposed to start a herd book of animals possessing good milking qualities. The scheme will be found in the Appendix.

In fact, one of the difficulties with which Irish agriculture has to contend is the different and to some extent conflicting interests of the milk-producing

Improvement in
Store Cattle.

Appendix X.

Paragraph 129.

1900.

Campbell, 1716.

Dickson, 9088-90.

Shannon-Crawford,
9088-90.

Appendix XXXII

Scheme for
Milking Cattle.

1714.

1721.

Vaughan, 5703.

Lord Ebury, 5233.

Minutes of Council of
Agriculture, Vol. I.,
Nov. 14, 1905, p. 94.
Campbell, 1754.

Appendix XLVIII.

36, Dryden, 1733.

* Carolan, 6665; Cogan, 11840-53; Corbett, 4350-61; Darby, 13832-5; Higgins, 6521-7; Huston, 8501-4; Meekins, Rev. J., 7046; O'Connor, 4195-7; Poa, 11296; Reeve, 13102-5; Roberts, 4611-6; Small, 10252-5; Egan, 11731-2.

and beef-producing industries. The dairy farmer who looks to milk production alone and does not rear his calves is, unfortunately, indifferent as to the kind of bull he uses. The result is that in many parts of Ireland the market is flooded with inferior calves. It is well known that it is impossible at an early age to distinguish between a well-bred and an ill-bred calf. These calves are distributed broadcast over the country, and the quality both of the cows and bullocks tends to deteriorate in proportion to the prevalence of the practice. Indeed, it seems an open question whether it would not be more prudent and remunerative in the long run, under these circumstances, not to rear such calves at all. This is exactly one of the questions which are still in process of discussion and which have given rise to the views embodied in the resolution of the Council of Agriculture, referred to in paragraph 88.

91. One of the criticisms to which the live stock schemes have been subjected is that it is a mistake, at all events in many parts of Ireland, to insist, as the schemes do, upon the award of premiums to pure-bred bulls only, and it is specially urged that this condition works badly in the poorest districts.* But in other parts of Ireland also many witnesses appear to consider that, having regard to the limitations in the number of available bulls which the premium system necessarily involves, it would be better to proceed by some method of certificates or licensing† which would have the effect of eliminating the inferior bulls and leaving available for service only those which, though not necessarily pure-bred, would be greatly superior to a very large number of the bulls at present in use. Mr. Coffey, representing the Cattle Traders' and Stock Owners' Association, presented to us a detailed plan of which the object is to provide a supply of half-bred bulls, the offspring of good dairy cows of the district mated with a pure-bred bull. We do not feel called upon to discuss the comparative merits of these views and that adopted by the Department of Agriculture in the schemes which it recommends for adoption by the local authorities. Some observations on the subject will be found in the Memorandum appended to this Report by our colleague, Mr. Dryden, who is entitled to speak on the question as an expert. All we think it right to say is that we see no reason upon the evidence before us to doubt that the methods hitherto adopted by the Department have been on the right lines, though this, like every other part of the scheme, must necessarily be subject to such modifications as experience and enlightened public opinion, expressed through the medium of the local authorities, prove to be desirable.

It will be seen from the table printed in the Appendix that the amount expended on bull premiums rose from £4,039 in 1901 to £12,380 in 1906.

92. The horse-breeding scheme has given rise to much discussion, as might be expected from the great variety of views and requirements prevailing in different parts of the country. The main object of the horse-breeding scheme was (1) to induce owners of stallions "to keep sound and suitable sires of a high degree of excellence;" (2) "to induce farmers to retain their best young mares for breeding purposes."

The earliest scheme was submitted in 1900 by the Advisory Committee, and approved by the Agricultural Board in November, 1900, when £5,000 was set apart for the purposes of the scheme. The scheme for each subsequent year was printed in the minutes of the Agricultural Board, and that for 1906 will be found in the Appendix.

The funds available for this scheme consisted, as in all other cases, of the joint fund partly supplied by the Department and partly by the local authorities. In the scheme for 1903 and subsequently, the joint fund is, after the expenses of administration have been provided for, to be applied to the nomination of mares and in prizes or premiums to county and local shows.

93. An essential feature of the scheme is the registration of approved stallions, and there has been from time to time some controversy as to the breeds which are best suited for various parts of Ireland.

* DENNIS, 15725-46; ARCHDALE, 8226-31; DALY (App. LIX); DUNBAR, 13225-31; DEKISON, 9089; HALL, 8264; KENNEDY, 4657-8.
† See footnote to Paragraph 88.

An interesting discussion on the question how far the choice of breeds suited to special districts should be left to the local authority, and to what extent the Department should exercise its power of disapproving of the proposals of the local authority, was referred to the Agricultural Board in August, 1901. The Vice-President then laid down the principle that "in matters where the action of a particular locality as regards any of the purposes of the Act might injuriously affect the country as a whole the Department were bound by the responsibility imposed on them to exercise supreme control." Subject to this "it was the intention of the Department to allow the local authorities as much discretion as possible." The occasion of this discussion was a suggestion by an important member of the horse-breeding Committee, Mr. Frederick Wrench, that "it should be left to the county committees to select the class and breed of horses which they wished to be subsidised from public funds." The view of the expert committee on horse-breeding was that the subsidising of certain breeds of horses, no matter in what locality, would affect injuriously the horse-breeding industry of the country, as a whole. The Vice-President contended that if this was so the discretion could not be left to localities "without the central body abrogating their most important function, namely, that of securing that a national industry should be dealt with from the point of view of the country at large, and not from that of special localities." The Board, after discussion, "unanimously expressed their approval of the principle of central control, and stated that they would be unable to sanction any grants in aid of a live stock scheme which did not provide for it."

Acting on the principle thus early adopted, the Department and the Board have, with the exception mentioned below, confined the registration of stallions to certain classes. Thoroughbreds may be registered anywhere in Ireland, Clydesdale and Shire stallions only in particular districts. The reason for this restriction is stated by Professor Campbell. In reference to a diagram which showed the development in the registration of sires, he said—

"You will observe a stoppage in the increase of the agricultural horses; that was owing to the action of our Advisory Committee, who pointed out that we were going to ruin the breed of Irish hunters by introducing these heavy horses, and acting on the advice of the Advisory Committee, with the approval of the Agricultural Board, we put a restriction on the introduction of these agricultural horses except in Ulster, near Dublin, where heavy cart-horses are kept, County Louth, a tillage country, and part of Cork. One of these agricultural horses costs about less than half of one of these thoroughbreds. They were beginning to come in too fast, and I think that is an instance where our Advisory Committee has done great good to the country in stopping the introduction of these animals." 1622.

94. Before a stallion can be registered he is inspected for suitability and soundness. At first a large proportion of those offered were rejected, and a good deal of disappointment was caused. In the result, however, there was a large increase of suitable animals and a decrease of inferior animals offered for registration. Constant applications from intending purchasers are made to the Department to find or assist in finding a suitable sire; and in order to increase as much as possible the number of suitable sires, the Department purchases sires on its own account, and also makes advances in subsidies to approved applicants to assist them in purchasing stallions and placing them in districts where registered stallions are not already available. The method adopted is to advance two-thirds of the price to be paid with 2½ per cent. interest, in five years. The horse remains in the control of the Department, as mortgagee, for five years, but the farmer who owns the horse has the use of him. This method has the advantage of keeping the animal in the country during the period in which he is most serviceable. Otherwise it might well happen that the horse might be sold to some other country at a large profit. It is a condition of the transaction that the loan cannot be repaid till the end of five years, and thus security is taken that the horse does not, till the end of that period, go out of the country. There appear to have been 9 such loans granted in 1903, 12 in 1904, 11 in 1905, and 8 in 1906.

The number of stallions of the breeds above referred to registered in each year since 1901 is shown in the table in the Appendix, and has risen from 128 in 1901 to 239 in 1906.

The administration of the part of the scheme which relates to the selection of breeding mares is in the hands of the county committees. The practice is for the county committees to hold exhibitions of young mares

Details of Scheme.
Campbell, 1640.

Appendix VIII,

in the spring. The Department allots to each county a certain number of "nominations," and sends a judge and a veterinary surgeon to inspect the mares put forward for nomination. They select a number of fit mares, and the county committee issue to the owner of the selected mare a nomination ticket. This ticket entitles the owner to send the mare to any stallion on the register without payment of any fee. The fees are paid by the county committee out of the joint fund. In 1906, 227 exhibitions were held, and 3,638 nomination tickets were issued. The sum actually expended for nominations was £8,400.

Appendix VIII.

The Irish Draught Horse.

Paragraph 29.

Eaton, 7631-70.
Doran, 18750-8
Horton, 8453-60

95. It is not surprising that the restriction of the register to the breeds above-mentioned has not been popular in certain parts of Ireland. We have already seen that the Department has been subjected to severe criticism for not taking sufficiently energetic steps to preserve or revive the type of horse known as the old Irish draught horse. In other parts of the country complaints are made of the exclusion of hackney and half-bred sires, and it is also complained that too little is being done to preserve from extinction two types of ponies formerly well known, the Connemara pony and Cushendall pony of the glens of Antrim. The "old Irish draught horse," if not extinct, is, at all events, very difficult to discover. The best description of the breed was given by Mr. Malone, of Brookstown, Naas, the substance of which is contained in Mr. Dryden's memorandum.

15496-52.

Supplemental Schemes

Appendix IX.

Minutes of
Council of Agriculture,
Vol. I., Feb. 3,
1905, p. 36; Nov. 15,
1905, p. 41.

96. Resolutions in favour of taking steps to prevent the extinction of the Irish draught horse were brought forward in the Council of Agriculture by P. Hanlon (Carlow), on May 28th, 1903, and April 12th, 1904, and referred to the advisory committee on horse-breeding. In 1905 the Department, with the approval of the Board, issued a supplemental scheme of subsidies to Irish draught, hunter, and half-bred sires. In announcing that it was prepared to subsidise approved sires of the above types, as well as ponies suitable for the poorer districts, a premium of £50 was offered for the service, by approved stallions of these classes, of fifty mares belonging to farmers whose valuation does not exceed £30. A resolution was passed by the Council of Agriculture in February, 1905, approving of the encouragement given by the Department to the breeding of the Irish draught horse, but expressing the opinion that further steps were needed. A further resolution to the same effect was passed in the following November.

At the meeting of the Council on May 16, 1906, an amendment to a proposed resolution censuring the Department for not carrying into effect the previous resolutions of the Council was, after explanations by Professor Campbell of the action of the Department, and the reasons for it, and some discussion, passed unanimously in the following terms:—

"That the proposal to establish an improved breed of draught horses, such as this country requires, by means of studs at the Department's educational farms, is not the most practicable course to adopt in order to secure the object desired."

"That in the opinion of this Council there is required for this purpose a separate and special establishment where not only blood mares of the Irish draught type can be kept, but where colts likely to make good sires, purchased throughout the country, may be reared until fit for service; and that a stud-book for that breed be established."

Campbell, 15995.

The policy embodied in these resolutions is an instance of a divergence of opinion on an important question between the Council of Agriculture on the one hand and the majority of the county committees, the advisory committee on horse-breeding, and the Agricultural Board on the other. The Department and the Board, in view of the opinion expressed by the Council of Agriculture, gave way, and in the autumn of last year a supplementary scheme was made to meet the wishes of the Council of Agriculture. A special stud-book for Irish draught horses has been opened and already five stallions have been accepted for registration as typical of this class. Further observations on this subject will be found in Mr. Dryden's Memorandum.

Mr. Hanlon, member of the Council of Agriculture, representing the county of Carlow, who had brought forward the resolution above referred to, told us—

11255

"I was very anxious about the revival and preservation of the old Irish horse. I brought forward resolutions several times, but it was a long time before I could persuade the Department to take it up, but now I think they have done nearly all that could be expected."

97. Another scheme is that for the improvement of the breed of pigs. At first in April, 1901, a single scheme relating to both sheep and swine was approved by the Agricultural Board. The part of the scheme relating to sheep was not found to work successfully. The inherent difficulties attending the working of the sheep scheme led to its abandonment after the first year, except in Wicklow and the congested districts.

The Swine Scheme.

Cowpitt, 1712.

The swine scheme has been renewed annually. Every county except Antrim has adopted the scheme. In Antrim some experiments are being made with regard to the local breed.

1253.

The scheme of 1906 is set out in the Appendix. It will be seen that it follows, generally, the lines of the cattle scheme.

Appendix XLVII.

The amount of the premium is £5 for the first year, £3 for the second year. The premiums are restricted to boars eligible for entry in the herd book of their particular breeds, or in the Register of Pigs of the Royal Dublin Society.

From the table set out in the Appendix it will be seen that the number of premiums for boars actually paid rose from 151 in 1901 to 273 in 1906. In 1904 there was a considerable fall in the number of premiums allotted as compared with the previous year. The reason of this falling-off appears to have been a rise of the price of boars owing to increased competition and the limitation of number of boars due to restriction on importation. In the scheme of 1905 a clause was introduced that "the Department will as far as practicable, assist intending purchasers to secure suitable boars." The method adopted is that selected applicants for premiums should deposit £2 with the county committees, and that the balance of the price of the animal should be deducted from the amount of the premium at the end of the season. According to Professor Campbell, "the result of this arrangement has been that the scheme is now working much more satisfactorily than in previous years. I anticipate that in a short time we will be able to show as good results under this as under the cattle scheme."

Appendix XI.

1753.

98. It is not a matter of surprise that, as in the case of horse-breeding and other questions, differences of opinion have arisen between the Department and the local farmers as to the best breed of pigs. The Department favours the Yorkshire breed, while some witnesses stoutly maintain the superiority of the local breed to which they have been accustomed. An interesting discussion on the subject, in the course of which it appears that Canadian experience is in favour of the Department's view, will be found in the examination of Mr. Lockhart, an experienced farmer, and a member of the Armagh county committee, by Mr. Dryden. General Clifford (Cavan) gives a graphic illustration of the apparent superiority of the native breed as a sucking pig and of the real superiority of the pure-bred animal when three months old. The type recommended by the Department is approved by certain of the witnesses from Down; on the other hand, we are told that the Yorkshire does not find favour with the farmers in some parts of the county, owing to its having erect and not drooping ears, and to suspicion as to the quality of its produce. Fermanagh complains of the difficulty of obtaining a sufficient supply of boars. In Galway, on the other hand, Mr. Burke, member of the county council and agricultural committee, stated that the swine scheme has been a great success and that the boars are obtainable for "almost nothing." The evidence of Father Meehan, representing the county committee of Leitrim, is best given in his own words—

Local evidence as to working of the Swine Scheme.

10350-4.
2003.

BoE, 2033-2.
Sturman-Creswell,
2073-20.

Dodson, 2113.
Young, 2220.
Archdale, 2369.
Hall, 2384.

Burke, 2115.

* With regard to swine, that is an instance of where the people have been educated. In the beginning the people did not believe the Department were on the right lines—that is, in the County Leitrim. They now believe they are on the right line. I have taken the trouble to find out, and it is like this. The first time those Yorkshire pigs were introduced they did not sell very well in the markets. The owners were beaten in price by pigs of a flabby description, which were then prevalent. They were all hybrid, no recognized breed of pigs whatever. There are a few of the old black pigs in the country still, but they are very few. But when the Limerick buyers come to know these pigs, they require a special stamp of pig, and the Yorkshire breed exactly fills the bill; so they are getting far higher prices now than they were. Without the Department I do not see how they could ever have been introduced into the country. It was quite a new experience to the people to see the officers of a Government Department taking any interest in the people."

7035.

Mr., now Sir A. Shaw, a member of the Limerick Chamber of Commerce, stated that the South of Ireland bacon curers had spent £30,000 in the purchase and distribution of boars with a view to improving the breed of pigs, and that the result had been that in some districts there is now a finer breed than can be had in England. The Limerick county committee had not till recently adopted the scheme, and he makes it a complaint against the Department that it has been too apathetic in not compelling or inducing the county council and committee to take up the question of the improvement of the breed of swine at an earlier date. He, however, confined himself to a general statement, and did not indicate in what manner the Department ought to have brought pressure on the local authority. Mr. Larmine (Mayo) who did not appear in a representative capacity, but has been connected with the county all his life in the management of large estates and farms, says as to the scheme for breeding pigs:—

"I don't really think there is much improvement required in that. The breeding of pigs has been absolutely revolutionised in this county; we have as good a breed of pigs as they have in any part of Ireland. The buyers come up from Limerick, and all the South of Ireland to buy our pigs."

Similar evidence was given by Mr. Galvin, chairman of the committee of agriculture of county Roscommon—

"I take one item—pigs—and already we have practically transformed the entire of the breed of pigs, which is a very considerable item in Roscommon; we have twenty-four boars, and the effect of the introduction of better blood has been to transform the whole pig breed of Roscommon; I have heard it estimated by a very extensive pig-buyer that the effect of our scheme has been to increase the value of the Roscommon pigs by at least £10,000 a year."

In North Tipperary the chairman of the committee of agriculture regrets that the subsidies provided by the committee for pure-bred boars "are not availed of at the present to any appreciable extent."

99. The general result of the extracts from the evidence above given appears to justify the conclusion that the scheme for improvement of pig-breeding encouraged by the Department is on the right lines, but that there is much room for further development.

100. The subject of instruction in poultry-keeping has already been referred to. We have now to consider the steps taken by the Department and the county committees to improve the quality and increase the quantity of Irish poultry and eggs. The Agricultural Board, in August, 1903, approved an estimate of £1,500 for egg distributing stations. The method adopted was to provide for a limited number of premiums of £5 each to suitable applicants who should distribute at least sixty settings of eggs, with smaller premiums proportioned to smaller distributions. Conditions were imposed providing for limitation of the breed of hens kept, the destruction or removal of all existing inferior fowls, and the exclusion of new fowls of inferior description. Other provisions were also made for preserving the purity of the breed, for housing, food and space.

Settings of eggs were to be supplied to any person in the county at 1s. per dozen, all eggs were to be stamped, and an accurate record kept of all eggs laid and distributed. Assistance was provided to selected persons for providing themselves with approved portable wooden fowl-houses. The whole establishment was to be under the supervision of the instructor. Ducks, turkeys, and geese were included in the scheme. Premiums were also offered for pure bred turkey cocks.

In 1904 and 1905 the estimate for egg stations approved by the Board was £2,000. The number of settings to be distributed to earn the maximum premium was raised to seventy. In 1906 the number of egg stations throughout Ireland was 495; of these 315 were for hens only, and 180 for hens and ducks. Nearly 53,000 dozen of eggs were distributed. Turkey stations have been established in thirty counties, and the number of premiums offered for male birds was 425. In one county, Antrim, instead of the system of egg stations, a poultry farm has been established. This is fully described by Mr. Dryden in the memorandum annexed to the Report. Expert opinion, however, appears to prefer the system of numerous egg stations as of greater general utility and less liable to disease resulting from overcrowding.

101. In the opinion of many witnesses, the Irish farmer will profit comparatively little from an increase in the number and quality of eggs or fowls, unless he has open to him improved facilities for the disposal of his produce. This subject belongs properly to another head of this report, but it seems convenient to mention in this connection the steps taken by the Department to endeavour to increase the facilities for placing Irish poultry on the English market.

As Professor Campbell states —

"Enormous quantities of birds are shipped alive to Great Britain from Ireland, unfattened and unfit for the table. Many of these are fattened in establishments in Great Britain. They are sold as Surrey chickens, I am quite sure, in the London markets, and thus the main profits are lost to the Irish cottager. The Department have, however, induced a number of private individuals as well as one or two co-operative societies to take up the question of fattening birds in this country, and to send them to the English markets ready for the kitchen. As in every other branch of our work, a difficulty has been experienced in procuring properly-trained workers.

New and improved methods of distribution.

Paragraph 117.

1124.

"To meet this the Department have established a school in which the cramming and fattening of fowl for market are properly taught. This school is in County Wicklow, at Avondale, in connection with the forestry station. At this school, when our school is in full working order, we have from one to two thousand birds being constantly fattened and sent to the London market. These birds are the produce mostly of eggs which we send out from the station itself. We have room among the trees for this work, and we utilise that for distributing the eggs. In this case we have gone in largely for the Surrey fowl, the fowl that has such a reputation in the London market. The produce then comes into our station, and we fatten them and send them to London."

1125.

In the case of the Avondale fattening station, the Department claims to have shown that in business of this kind conducted on commercial lines, a large profit may be made, though under conditions combining instruction with trading there has been a considerable loss. Another method adopted by the Department has been to supply, if possible, a qualified manager free of charge for twelve months in cases "where a society or an individual puts up sufficient capital and building to warrant the hope that a successful poultry-fattening industry might be started in the district." Four cases are mentioned where this course has been taken.

Campbell, 1128.

1137-4.

102. In attempting to form some estimate of the working of this scheme by the local authorities, we have to take into account the important evidence given by representative witnesses from various counties in Ireland. With hardly an exception these witnesses speak favourably of the working of the scheme as regards the improvement which has taken place in the breeds of poultry, in the quantity and quality of eggs, and, in some cases, in the enhanced prices obtainable both for eggs and fowls. The weak point on which some of the witnesses dwell is the want of improved facilities for marketing both eggs and live and dead poultry.

Local Evidence.

We summarise briefly the evidence of witnesses from the following counties, taking them in alphabetical order.

Mr. McCance and Mr. Turtle, representing the Antrim county council, speak of the enormous benefit resulting from the working of the poultry farm at Cullybackey, already referred to.

8804.

8883.

In county Carlow, according to Mr. Hanlon, representing the agricultural committee and a member of the Agricultural Council, the poultry scheme is doing very well under a "first-rate instructress."

11193.

Mr. McQuaid, speaking for the agricultural committee of county Cavan, tells us that the scheme was a success, but that, owing to difficulties of marketing, prices had not risen, except that the grading and cleaning of eggs taught by the instructress raised their value 1s. 8d. per hundred.

825.

Mr. Roberts, representing the county Cork committee of agriculture, speaks of the difficulty of getting the people to abandon the old fowl, but says the committee has established 50 egg stations, and the demand for

803-7

eggs and poultry increases every year. He speaks of great improvement in the breed in many districts. "It is the markets principally we want for the poultry. The markets are very bad."

5068-71.

In county Down, according to Colonel Sharman-Crawford (chairman of county council), the benefits of the scheme are considerable. There is a very marked improvement in the prices both of fowls and eggs, and also in turkeys. Mr. Small and Mr. Young, farmers residing in the county, speak strongly in respect to the beneficial working of the scheme, and the improvement both as quantity and grade of eggs.

2558.

26075.

O'Neill, 3125.

The report from county Dublin is less satisfactory. This is referred to in the Memorandum on the County Schemes which is annexed to the Report.

Archdale, 5675.

West, 1272.

Barke, 6115.

Hyam, 6195.

The witnesses representing Fermanagh, Galway, and Leitrim speak of the scheme as a great success—"all that could be desired." Mr. Hughes notes a great improvement in the last five years. Mr. Burke tells us that "people make little revenues out of their dozen or two dozen hens, and it is extraordinary what a number of eggs are laid in excess of what there previously were; and people get a better price."

6105.

In Leitrim, Mr. Keane says that there is a much larger production of eggs than there used to be, and Father Meehan, a parish priest, whose evidence as regards the swine scheme has been already referred to, dwells on the great need for improvement in marketing facilities.

7029.

"At the present time while there is a small benefit in increased eggs and better poultry and stronger poultry, as an industry it is worthless; they get no more money than they got before."

6682A.

Mr. Clarke, the former secretary of the Mayo committee, says that poultry farms, meaning apparently egg-stations, of which there were 24, worked very well, but does not think that the lectures were of any utility. Mr. Carolan, the present secretary, put in the report of the committee, which contained a statement that the egg stations were working satisfactorily, but that more might be done for rearing and fattening fowl for the market. Mr. Carolan thinks that egg-stations are bound to increase according as the people get to understand the schemes better. Mr. Higgins, however, a member of the committee, is sceptical about the benefit of instruction, and would rather have the money spent in distributing eggs.

4675.

7

6936-8.

4040

Mr. Kennedy, from Meath, speaks of the scheme as working very well and with benefit to the county, "because we have a good instructress, and it is suitable to the wants of the people too."

Eggle, 36075.

Monaghan, according to the secretary of the county committee, has a number of egg-stations, and the whole thing is carried out as perfectly as possible.

6252

In Roscommon, according to Mr. Galvin, the chairman of the committee, there are 21 egg-stations, "working very well; 25,000 eggs of approved breeds were distributed this year. A good deal of distrust is still felt throughout the county as to the improved breeds, but still the fact remains that 25,000 eggs have been distributed and paid for, and no doubt the effect will soon be shown." Mr. Neary, a member of the county council and agricultural committee, also speaks of the success of the poultry scheme. "There is no doubt whatever that there is an improvement in the breed of poultry. The price of eggs is rising somewhat."

6207-8.

2259-2.

Mr. Keane, the secretary of the committee of county Sligo, tells us that the scheme has only been in operation for two years, "and has given great satisfaction; the people seem to take great interest in it." The lectures are very largely attended. "We were fortunate in getting a good poultry instructress, a very good lecturer."

The chairman of the North Tipperary committee of agriculture, the Rev. P. Crowe, parish priest, in the course of his extremely interesting and important evidence, says :—

"The result of our poultry instructors' work is apparent all over the county. No one can fail to notice the remarkable improvement that has taken place in the quality of the various fowls reared by the farmers and cottars both for egg-laying and table purposes. The penny nondescript breeds that prevailed a few years since have now given place generally to some of the very best breeds that the world can produce. The poultry exhibits at Nenagh and Thurles Shows surpassed anything of the kind held in former years in any provincial town, both for number and quality. We have pleasure in noting that the splendid poultry fattening station recently established under the direction of the Department in Nenagh has given the greatest possible fillip to the fowl rearing industry in North Tipperary. We are confident that if the farmers' wives and daughters devote more time and attention to the rearing of fowl of all kinds, it should become one of the most remunerative industries of the farm."

The Rev. J. Forde, Protestant clergyman, Cullen Rectory, vice-chairman of the Tipperary urban district committee, regrets that there are not greater facilities for marketing fowls.

The secretary of the county committee for Tyrone, Mr. Dallinger, enters into considerable detail as to the development of the poultry scheme in that county. More than 100 "pioneer" lectures on the subject were delivered before March, 1902—pure-breeds were introduced, numerous egg stations established—and since 1902 nearly 10,000 settings of 12 eggs of pure-bred fowls, ducks and geese, have been distributed in the county. He estimates that about 12,000 pure-bred birds are added annually to the county stock at an average cost to the county of about 7-10ths of a penny per bird. Measures are taken to select and improve the stock year by year, and Mr. Dallinger declares that many of the selected hens in Tyrone are now of such a quality that settings of eggs from them would realise 10s. per dozen in the open market during the breeding season. He goes on to describe the influence of the instruction and of the lectures on improvement in the methods of housing and feeding. In 1904 arrangements were made by the committee for the instructor to give practical demonstrations, preceded by a short lecture at the principal local shows on the fattening, killing, plucking, and trussing of poultry. In 1905 classes were formed, conducted by the Instructor on these subjects, and also on the grading, testing, and packing of eggs. The classes were held at ten centres in the county. A small portable poultry farm, which remains for six weeks in one place, and is then moved elsewhere, has been provided, lectures and practical work being carried on at each stopping place. With regard to prices since the scheme came into operation, it is found that in a single market town the prices per dozen of eggs rose from an average of 9-5d. in 1900 to 9-8½d. in 1905, having been as low as 8-9d. in 1902; in another town the average price in 1900 was 9-47d., in 1905 12-2d. per dozen. During the same period the average price of dead poultry is stated to have risen from 2s. 6d. to 3s. per pair.

In addition to the evidence above referred to, we have before us the latest reports of the agricultural committees of twenty-one counties, most of which specially refer to the poultry scheme as working very satisfactorily, and in many cases high testimony is borne to the great value of the work of the instructors employed by the county committees. We refer especially to the reports from counties Armagh, Clare, King's County, Longford, Louth, and Monaghan. In county Kerry, after some initial difficulties, good progress appears to have been made.

103. The scheme of the Department for subsidies to Agricultural and Industrial Shows will be found in Appendix. Sixty-one shows were subsidised in 1901 and 140 in 1906. The policy of the Department is to give encouragement to small rather than large shows. Professor Campbell considers the former more useful for the small farmer than the larger shows, though on this point he states there is some difference of opinion. The Agricultural Board vote annually a sum of £4,000 for subsidies to shows. This sum is distributed amongst the county committees. It appears that the Department has not been altogether satisfied with the working of this scheme. It is complained that in

Local Shows.

Appendix XXXVI.

Campbell, 1614.

some cases the schedules of prizes prepared by the show societies were not framed with sufficient care or supervision, and that county shows "are worked as a rule on too ambitious a scale, and the expenses of administration are often altogether out of proportion to the amount of prizes awarded or to the benefits derived by the county." Some further evidence as to the working of the show scheme will be found in the memorandum annexed to the Report.

Schemes of Prizes for Cottages and small Farms.

Appendix XXXVII.
Campbell, 1904.

104. In 1902-3 some counties included in their schemes provision for prizes for well-kept cottages and farms. It was stated to the Board by Professor Campbell that the success which had attended this portion of the schemes rendered it likely that similar provision would be made by other counties for the next year. It was proposed to prepare a general scheme. The Board approved, and voted £3,000 in connection with it. A similar sum was voted in the following year, the number of counties giving prizes for these objects having risen to 25. In 1905 a general scheme was issued, and is set out in the Appendix. The judging is done by the agricultural instructors, but no instructor can judge in the county in which he works. The scheme was adopted by 27 counties in 1905 and 31 in 1906, and is stated to have worked very successfully. In 1906 the amount offered in prizes was £5,538. The details of the prizes are drawn up by each county committee for itself in conjunction with the officers of the Department, except in county Cork, where another arrangement is made. Further details as to the working of the scheme in various counties are given in the memorandum.

The Flax Scheme.

105. The question of the cultivation and handling of flax in Ireland appears to give rise to questions of great intricacy and difficulty, on which very different views are held. In 1901, acting on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Flax, the Agricultural Board adopted a proposal of the Department to take over the services of three foreign experts then engaged in Ireland, to buy some Dutch and Riga seed, to frame a scheme for flax-growing to be financed by the Department to which the councils of the six Northern counties interested in flax-growing should contribute. The principal features of the scheme were to conduct experiments with manures and seeds and in retting and scutching flax, the visits of a scutching expert to the mills, the services of agents in continental flax-seed markets to advise and report as to the seed-supply, prizes for flax at local shows and markets, establishment of a training centre for the sons of Irish farmers in the cultivation, retting, scutching, and marketing of flax. It was also contemplated that the present managers of mills and scutchers might receive instruction at this institution. The total cost of carrying out this scheme was estimated at £1,500, of which the Department agreed to contribute £1,000. The counties referred to are Antrim, Armagh, Donegal, Down, Londonderry, and Tyrone. Counties Cavan and Monaghan subsequently joined. The scheme was further developed next year by provisions for enabling scutch mill owners to visit the continent, by lectures on the results of experiments and otherwise, and £2,500 was voted for the scheme, the contributions of the above-named counties amounting to £1,000. In the succeeding years the scheme has been renewed substantially on the same lines.

The evidence which has been laid before us by the Department and by the representative witnesses for the counties above mentioned makes it extremely difficult to draw definite conclusions as to the prospects of the flax industry in Ireland.

Campbell, 1905.

With regard to the cultivation of the crop the principal efforts of the Department and the county committees were directed to—1. Improvement in manuring; 2. Improvement in seed. As to the former very little was known. A large number of experiments were made under the schemes, and the results are stated to have been novel and interesting. There appears, however, to be but little material for any statement of definite results. The prize scheme

was graduated so as to encourage as much as possible small growers. The details in the matter of framing the schedule of prizes were left entirely to the county committees.

With regard to the improvement of flax seed, strenuous efforts were made by the Department to obtain a supply of the best foreign seed. The Department purchased this seed and distributed it in small lots amongst flax growers, so that it might be tested against local seed. The system also was adopted of giving prizes in seed at shows. This, however, does not appear to have been carried out to any large extent in the county schemes. It seems that Irish seed is not suitable and there is only a very small quantity of it, partly because the plant grown in Ireland is somewhat different from the plant used for seed in Russia, and partly because the mode of dealing with the crop in Ireland, owing, it is stated, to the difficulty of obtaining sufficient labour, involves the loss of the seed, which otherwise, if not suitable for growing, is excellent food for calves. In fact, the great difficulty in the way of successful and remunerative cultivation of flax in Ireland appears to be the difficulty of obtaining sufficient labour.* Some witnesses, however, are of opinion that the saving and sowing of Irish seed ought to be more encouraged than it is.

1902-4.

Stewart, 7026-00.
Warwick, 7130.

The report of the Antrim committee for 1904-5 speaks of the successful course of lectures given in 1904, also of a change in the system by discontinuing prizes for scutched flax and confining them to "flax on foot"—in other words, to the cultivation of flax. The judges reported favourably of the crop, but in some cases the crops were spoiled by bad sowing and by weeds. Mr. McConnell speaks of noticing improvement in the production of flax in the glens of Antrim.

Antrim.

The Armagh scheme also confines the prizes to the growing of flax. Mr. Murphy, member of the committee, says that flax growing was looked on in the county as a dying industry. Since the Department took the matter up it has a little improved, but there is great room for improvement. He thinks that more training is required, and that workmen, rather than experts, should be sent to learn continental methods. The expenditure upon the scheme in this county was £150, half being contributed by the Department.

Armagh.

8027.
8028.
8028.

In Donegal, Mr. O'Doherty, the secretary of the committee, says that since the flax scheme has been put into operation the culture of the crop has been very much revived in the flax-growing districts of the county. He has been informed that nearly twice as much flax is grown now as there was two years ago. He speaks somewhat unfavourably of the operation of prizes for scutched flax. The flax is specially scutched for "show." He is strongly in favour of giving prizes in seed rather than in money where possible, though this is difficult in case of growing flax, because seed is not wanted at that time of year. There were last year 138 entries for prizes, an addition of 36 over the previous year.

Donegal.

7011.

In county Down, according to Mr. Dickson, the chairman of the committee, the flax scheme has not been so successful as could have been wished. The cultivation of the crop is attended with too much risk, and there is also the difficulty of a scarcity of labour. He doubts the efficacy of the prize system, but approves the steps taken for the provision of good seed. Mr. Robb, a member of the committee, takes the same view, and would have the money spent on instruction.

Down.

8007-a.
9100-a.
9122.

It appears from the report of the county committee that in this county the prizes are offered to growers only, and were given in money, not in seed. The total amount allocated for the purpose of the scheme for 1906 was £100, half of which was contributed by the Department.

* Reade, 6852-61; Murphy, 8552-4; Huston, 8530-4; Dickson, 9104; Melvin, 6689-91; Macfarlane, 7442.

Monaghan.

Monaghan has a flax prize scheme graduated, as in all other cases, in classes, according to the valuation of the holding. The judge's report for 1906 is favourable. The crop is reported as good all over in the southern half of the county—not so good in the northern. The prizes are given in seed, a practice the judge strongly approves of; he believes the failure of this fine industry in years gone by was largely due to bad seed. There seems to be much room for improvement in the mode of sowing the seed. The amount expended in prizes in this county in 1906 was £61 5s., half being payable by the Department.

Londonderry

Stewart, 1906.

The county committee of Londonderry have adopted the scheme, and give prizes in cash. The classes consist of (1) growers, (2) scutchers, (3) other employees in mills where prize lots were scutched, (4) mill owners.

Tyrone.

Appendix XII

In county Tyrone, also, a similar scheme was adopted, being section C of the general scheme set out in the Appendix. In this county all prizes were given in seed. The judge, Mr. J. W. Stewart, reported that in the southern portion of the county the scutching is carried out in a most creditable manner. He does not report so favourably of the scutching in the northern part of the county, owing, it would seem, to a difference in the character of the machinery. Mr. Stewart appears to have been employed by the Department in 1904 to give lectures in these counties, which he states are well attended. His evidence, however, as to the flax industry in Londonderry, and that of Mr. Warnock is not very encouraging. He appears to think that little or no good is to be gained from Belgian training and experience. As to the growing and handling of flax, he thinks that Irish seed and methods are preferable to foreign.

7559-65.

The evidence of Mr. Stewart appears to be at variance with that of Mr. Reade, President of the Belfast Chamber of Commerce, who gives figures to show "how badly and imperfectly flax is grown in Ireland." He goes on to point out the superiority of the Belgian method of cultivation of flax and of subsequent treatment. With regard to the effect of the operations of the Department he states:—

8815.

8851.

See Chapter VI, 1903

"In Ireland in 1894 there were over 100,000 acres sown. That dropped in 1899, when it was at its minimum, 34,000 acres. It has since been unsteady, but on the whole it has been on the ascending scale, and this year there is probably 50,000 to 55,000 acres in flax. A great stimulus has been given to the growth of flax by the operations of the Department. I have no doubt that if the Department had not stepped in about 1900 flax cultivation would have diminished still further. They have been giving prizes for samples of flax for dress and finish, and also for fields. They have sent out instructions over the country, and they have had experimental plots for testing the various manures, and they have issued very useful little tracts about seed, and they have a distinct branch for seeds, so that anyone can send seed there, and test its germinating power."

He then refers to a "small experiment" in applying Belgian methods of drying flax, which the Department had undertaken at the instance of the Flax Supply Association, and is asked—

"8852. Is it your own personal opinion that there is no reason why these improved methods could not be applied?—My own personal opinion is strongly that it can be done; but others think the opposite, and, therefore, I asked the Department to try it on a small scale. The reason that flax-growing has decreased is that it has not paid very well. I attribute that to the small farmers not treating it with sufficient skill, and where others want to grow it there has been a scarcity of labour. Flax is not like other crops. When you have grown it you have also to ret it and scutch it, and as the time of retting, &c., harvest operations are in full blast. The remedy should be to adopt a scientific system, under which the farmer, having grown the flax, is done with it, and sells it to the middleman, who generally has a retting place and a place for scutching."

It appears that the attention that has been directed to the growing and treatment of flax has resulted in a gratifying change in the extent of the crop. The diminution in the number of acres under flax, which held until 1899, has now been checked and has given place to a decided increase, the figures for 1906 being over 55,000 acres as compared with 34,000 acres in 1899.

(b) *DIRECT ACTION OF CENTRAL AUTHORITY.*

106. Having now dealt with the steps taken for the advancement of agriculture by the joint action of the central and local authorities, financed through the joint fund, we have to enumerate the principal ways in which the Department endeavours to assist agriculture by its direct action, and entirely out of the endowment fund placed at its disposal subject to the concurrence of the Agricultural Board.

107. The importance of establishing a system of seed-testing for farmers was early recognised. In November, 1900, a proposal to make arrangements for this purpose was brought before the Agricultural Board. With the approval of the Board the arrangements were made, and the cost was in the first instance defrayed out of the Parliamentary vote. After April 1, 1901, on objection taken by the Treasury, the cost was paid out of the endowment fund, and a sum of £200 per annum was voted annually for the purpose. A seed-testing station has been set up in Dublin, to which farmers can send seeds to be tested at a charge of threepence per sample. A table will be found in the Appendix showing that the number of samples of seeds sent to be tested rose from 387 in 1901 to 1,478 in 1906.

Much importance is attached to this work, for Ireland has been the "dumping ground of bad seed."

Notices are posted in the seed season at police barracks and elsewhere calling attention to the opportunities for seed-testing. Some difficulty arises from attempts to use the Department's tests for purposes of advertisement, and it is necessary to charge a higher rate for testing samples of seeds for others than farmers. Mr. Rudd, Agricultural Instructor for the West Riding of the county of Cork, gave some striking evidence of the great amount of defective seeds sown in his district, and of the beneficial effects which followed on the demonstration of the loss which farmers were sustaining from this cause. He stated that the practice of the farmers demanding, and the dealers giving, a guarantee of quality, was largely increasing, and in process of time "all will be able to get it."

108. It has already been pointed out that the dairying industry of Ireland is carried on either at the individual farm or at the creamery. Home dairying has been already dealt with, as falling under the county schemes, which are worked by the joint action of the Department and the local authority. Creameries are dealt with by the central authority exclusively. Creameries were established in Ireland long before the existence of the Department. Its action is confined to the improvement of the methods under which they are conducted. The Department has, it is hardly necessary to state, no power of making or enforcing regulations. It can only advise and offer inducements for the adoption of improved methods. For these purposes the Department has framed a general scheme. The scheme provides for (a) inspection and registration of creameries and auxiliaries; (b) supervision by visiting instructors; (c) winter courses in dairy technology for managers; (d) an annual examination for creamery managers' certificates, and (e) surprise butter competitions.

About 150 creameries are registered and inspected, and a register of well-managed creameries is kept, on which managers are anxious to have their creameries included. The inspection is concerned with the methods employed, the buildings, equipment, and suitability for training pupils. The staff employed by the Department consists of two inspectors and four travelling teachers in dairying, whose duty it is to visit the creameries applying for their services and to give technical advice. Three hundred and twenty creameries are now on the visiting list. Courses are arranged at the Albert Institution for students who intend to become creamery managers, and in winter there are special courses for engineering and dairy technology. A good deal of knowledge of machinery is required for running the engines and the pasteurising plant required in a creamery. The students receive a maintenance allowance and free instruction.

Seed-testing Station.

Campbell, 1915.
Mogwe, 1934.

Appendix XIII.

Campbell, 1905.
Mogwe, 1930.

18925.

12327.

Creameries.
Paragraph 80.

Campbell, 1925.

The Department also holds an annual examination, and gives provisional certificates as to the result of the examination to creamery managers. The full certificate is only given when, in addition to obtaining the provisional certificate, the candidate has for twelve months managed a creamery to the satisfaction of the Department.

Campbell, 1927.

The surprise butter competitions are carried out by despatching without previous notice, on not less than five or more than eight occasions during the season, telegrams to managers who have entered for competition requesting that a box or packet of the butter made on the day the telegram is sent off may be at once sent to an address in Dublin. The prizes are awarded by four judges, three of whom are representatives of the principal markets in Great Britain.

Winter Dairying.

Closely connected with the butter-making industry, both as carried on in creameries and in the houses of the farmers, is the question of winter dairying. Ireland can never hope to compete successfully with Denmark as a butter-producing country unless she is able to send out an adequate supply of butter all the year round, instead of as at present having an adequate supply only in the summer months. So far the Department has not seen its way to promote winter dairying otherwise than through agricultural instructors urging the importance of the question and the necessity of increased tillage in order to supply the food needed in winter. In county Cork, through the action of the Bishop of Ross, a scheme operating mainly as a prize scheme has been started. Various suggestions have been made, for instance, to induce farmers who carry on winter dairying to keep and publish proper accounts, so as to demonstrate that winter dairying is profitable, or to give a bonus to the industry—a method which the Department is reluctant to adopt. Hitherto no satisfactory method of encouraging winter dairying has been discovered. The great need seems to be the improvement and extension of tillage. We are glad to learn that there has been a definite increase in the number of acres under tillage in Ireland—best marked in the province of Leinster, but we regret that the movement in this direction has not yet become more effective in all the dairying districts.

Campbell, 1923,
19015-26.

Cheese-making.

109. Another industry closely connected with creameries is the making of cheese. Cheese-making cannot at present be said to be an Irish industry. The Department, in order to test the question whether cheese could be profitably made in Ireland, rented a farm in county Cork, and equipped thereon a cheese-making plant. Nearly all the milk on the farm was converted into cheese of excellent quality. It has been sold at top prices, chiefly in the Glasgow market. But at present it seems that, for various reasons given by Professor Campbell, cheese-making is not likely to be adopted in Ireland on a large scale. Enough has, however, been done to show that first-class cheese can be made in Ireland, and that it is possible that, in the event of the collapse of the store stock or the butter trade, cheese-making might be introduced with fair prospect of success.

1889.

1888.

Tobacco.

110. The cultivation of tobacco has also been attempted. In 1900 a French expert was brought over, and experiments were tried, showing that tobacco could be grown in Ireland which was capable of being manufactured into a smoking mixture. At the instance of the Department a rebate of the Excise duty payable on the tobacco grown in Ireland to the amount of 1s. per lb. has been allowed to certain selected farmers who cultivate tobacco under the advice of the Department. Professor Campbell is of opinion that as long as farmers get a shilling in the pound "tobacco will be grown, and grown plentifully and at a profit." The cultivation of tobacco cannot be said to have passed out of the experimental stage. Only 100 acres were under cultivation last year. The services of an expert from Kentucky have been secured for a few years. Tobacco growing is a very costly undertaking, and can only be carried on in a few places with the permission of the Inland Revenue.

1895.

1897.

1896.

1896.

Early potato
growing.

111. Efforts have been made by the Department to encourage in certain districts early potato-growing. With this view the country has been

surveyed for suitable districts. Small quantities of seed and boxes are supplied free of charge. Technical advice is given as to the growing and harvesting of the crop, and efforts are made to put the growers in touch with various markets. The object is to get a sufficient bulk of produce raised in certain districts at the period of the year when the market is least well supplied. There is said to be an interval between the supply of early potatoes from West Cornwall and from Scotland which the Irish supply might fill. In some cases it is said that Irish farmers have made as much as £50 per acre for a crop of early potatoes in the ground, the purchaser doing the lifting of the crop. Sir Joselyn Gore-Booth gave us some valuable evidence as to early potato-growing in county Sligo, but thinks, as does also Professor Campbell, that there is much need for development of the industry on the commercial side.

Campbell, 1849.

1881.

1882-907.

112. The direct assistance given by the Department to fruit-growing as a commercial industry consists in the steps taken (1) to increase the quantity of fruit grown; (2) to improve the methods of the distribution of the produce.

Fruit-growing.

Moore, 18376.

(1.) The first step taken by the Department to encourage fruit-growing in Ireland was to make arrangements for the distribution of fruit trees at cost price.

"County committees are authorised to purchase trees in bulk at wholesale prices and re-sell them to farmers, cottagers and others at cost price, plus carriage. We do not give the trees free; they pay the wholesale price and carriage; we contract with a large nurseryman, who will give them at a great reduction compared with what a farmer would pay himself."

Campbell, 1881.

Afterwards a survey was made of the whole country with the view of finding districts where fruit-growing was likely to be successful. Some very suitable districts were found.

Campbell, 1871-6.
Moore, 14374-438.

The plan adopted was to get the secretary of the local authority in counties found suitable to arrange, if possible, with twenty farmers within a radius of about five miles to give one acre for the cultivation of fruit, to undertake to fence it, and to follow the instructions of the Instructor supplied by the Department, who was usually not the county Horticultural Instructor. The Department supplies, free of cost, all the material for planting the acre, and pays the wages of the Instructor for five years—the whole of the produce belongs to the farmer, and the arrangement lasts for five years. It is hoped that at the end of that time the work will be carried on by the farmers independently.

Mr. Moore, the Keeper of the Botanical Gardens, whose high authority will not be questioned, states that:—

"I believe there is no other country in the world where fruit-growing has got such eminently practical and satisfactory support as that, and the result has been entirely satisfactory, our returns show that there has been this year a very good profit on all the well managed plots."

14374

"Eight such centres have been established in Ireland, one has forty acres instead of twenty. So great a success are they that we could plant twenty more centres in this year if we liked, but there are no men to do it, we have not material, and also I think after the support that has been given, it is not necessary to push it so far now as it has been done. The men are taking such an intelligent interest in it, they are quite different in the orchard work from the ordinary farm work."

It is important to observe that the action of the Department in respect of these plots is not so much the benefit of the individual farmer who joins the scheme as to show by demonstration the results which may be arrived at by the cultivation of fruit under favourable circumstances. The following questions and answers emphasise this point—

"14408. I suppose you look as one of the benefits of establishing this system to its spreading over the country?—That was the whole object in starting, to make them examples and demonstration plots to show what could be done. We knew perfectly well when the thing was got properly started, and the districts had decided for themselves whether they were suitable or not, the people would come in.

"14409. Do you think it has had that effect as yet?—Very much, especially in certain districts they are planting more and more; they are all inclined to plant. If you could get the statistics now of the number of fruit trees sold last year as compared with four or five years ago by the County Council; they are increasing so much."

H 2

Campbell, 1873.

(2.) In order to introduce improved methods of distribution the Department employs an expert adviser, Mr. Harper, to advise fruit-growers as to the best methods of grading, packing, and marketing of the fruit. The highest quality of fruit—that which is suitable for shows, or to be sold in small quantities in retail shops—is packed in packages of a special character, made in Ireland, which have already attained, we are told, considerable reputation. In the case of apples, those of good, but not the highest quality, are packed in what are called standard packages, containing about a bushel, in which case is taken that the fruit shall be uniform throughout the whole bushel. Then follows a “second” grade, which in a plentiful year are used for “canning;” and last, the sound but misshapen apples, which are used for cider.

Harper, 1566-74.

Campbell, 1876.

Harper, 15445-95.

Fruit Industries
at Drogheda and
Portadown.

Paragraph 131.

113. In order to test the possibility of making profit out of second or third-class fruit, the Department endeavoured to start or assist special industries for making of jam, canning and preservation of fruit, and cider-making. In Drogheda the establishment of a jam factory was encouraged by the Department, and a loan was made to the promoters for the erection of the necessary plant. In proposing the loan of £1,000 for the approval of the Agricultural Board, the Vice-President stated that the Association which had undertaken the enterprise, and had obtained subscriptions amounting to £2,500, was engaged in developing a new industry, which, if successful, would have far-reaching effects, not only on the districts over which the Association's operations would extend, but in other parts of Ireland as well. This consideration, he urged, would justify a departure from the usual practice of limiting assistance to industries to the technical instruction and information necessary to their success. It was found that the enterprise could not be made to pay, and ultimately the Association was wound up, and the greater part of the Department's loan was written off.

Finckert, 629-31.
17235-46.

For the same purpose, in order to test whether second-class fruit could be profitably grown and the produce put on the market, the Department, in 1901, proposed to try certain experiments in fruit and vegetable drying, and the Agricultural Board voted a sum of £200 for the purpose. The processes were exhibited at the Cork Exhibition in 1902, and appear to have aroused great interest. In consequence, the Department in that year proposed to the Agricultural Board to try an experiment on a commercial scale, and for this purpose an expenditure of £2,000 was sanctioned in August. It was found that it would be necessary to equip a factory and employ a staff. It was proposed to carry on the business for three years, and then to dispose of it. For this purpose a further grant of £4,000 was sanctioned by the Board. The industry was established at Portadown. The report on the first year's working was that the output, though small, was of good quality and commanded a ready sale. A further sum of £1,000 for working capital was voted by the Board. In August, 1904, a further grant of £2,000 was sanctioned by the Board for working capital. In the same year a branch of the Portadown industry was established at Drogheda, and a sum of £2,500 was voted for this purpose. In November, 1904, the expenditure of a further sum of £4,000 was sanctioned. In May, 1905, the Vice-President informed the Board that the Department was of opinion that the time had arrived when the factories at Portadown and Drogheda should be transferred to private firms. He claimed that they had succeeded in establishing a new industry—vegetable drying—and also a bottling and canning industry, which was new in Ireland. It was always contemplated that the industries should be transferred when the commercial soundness of the undertaking was established. Offers had been received for taking over the industry by various private firms. The Board authorised the Department to make the best arrangements it could for the transfer. By this time the operations of the Department aroused considerable opposition on the part of the Confectioners' Association in England, who asserted that what was practically a State-supported industry was entering into competition with the English trade. In consequence, opposition was threatened in Parliament, and strong pressure was brought to bear on the Department to discontinue its operations. The view taken by the Vice-President was that the carrying on of the industry would be justifiable only so long as the proceeding was in the nature of an experiment, and that the Department had,

Campbell, 1871.

Finckert, 629, 17235.

Finckert, 629-33,
17235-46.

in fact, "carried out the purpose which was intended." Although, therefore, on financial grounds it would probably have been better to have carried on for a longer period, it was determined to transfer the business at once, and this was done.

Flaherty, 17228-9.

114. Amongst the steps taken by the Department to assist agriculture by means of its endowment fund must be mentioned the special investigations and experiments which from time to time are undertaken. Some of them have been already referred to.

Special investigations.

115. Professor Campbell explained to us some experiments in barley-growing which had been undertaken in conjunction with Messrs. Guinness with the view of ascertaining what was the best sort of barley for farmers to grow.

Barley-growing.
1899.

In connection with the effects of creameries on the breeding of stock, which is said to be injurious owing to the poor quality of the separated milk, a number of experiments were carried on at the Cork Exhibition in 1902 with the view of demonstrating the methods of replacing with artificial fats the nutritious qualities of the separated milk. The methods adopted at Cork were, however, unfavourably criticised by Mr. R. H. Beamish. Similar experiments have since been carried on at some of the Department's farms, and have resulted in much improvement as regards the rearing of calves.

Calf-feeding.
1902.

1906.

116. Special investigations have also been held as to outbreaks of disease in cattle. The principal instance of such an investigation was in the case of an outbreak of "white scour" in Limerick, which was attributed to the creameries. The French Government placed at the disposal of the Department the services of the late Professor Nocard, head of the Veterinary College at Alfort, near Paris. A laboratory was fitted up for him, and a large staff employed for his investigations, which were on an extensive scale. Ultimately he discovered the micro-organism which caused the disease, and that its existence was due to the uncleanly state of the premises in which the calf was born, and made certain recommendations, which the Department has carried out since "with the very best results." The result of these investigations proved of the greatest value throughout the counties where the disease prevailed.

Diseases.
Campbell, 1902.

1904.

117. There is danger that improved methods of agricultural education will assist but little to advance the material prosperity of Ireland, unless there is also an improvement in the opportunity both of obtaining the necessary materials for successful agriculture, and of disposing of the increased produce. It was realised for several years before the Department of Agriculture came into existence that it was of the first importance to create an organisation which should aim at bettering the condition of the Irish farmers in both these directions. It was thought that these objects could be best effected by promotion of co-operation amongst the small holders of land.

Co-operation.

The first start was made in 1889, when an association was formed for the purpose of applying the principle of co-operation to the production of butter. One co-operative creamery was started in that year by the association. Before 1889 such creameries as existed were owned by joint stock companies and by farmers, and some by land owners. In 1906 the number of co-operative creamery societies was 860. The principle of these societies is that the farmers who supply the milk are themselves the shareholders in the society, and consequently have the control of its proceedings. The next step was to form small societies for the purpose of purchasing seeds and manures. Gradually other societies were formed. There were societies for sheep breeding, for poultry, for bees, for obtaining and hiring out machinery, and for other purposes. Until after the establishment of the Department, the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, as the parent Association was called, had been supported entirely by voluntary contributions, including grants from the Congested Districts Board.

Anderson, 14465.

Byrne, 13259-3.

118. When the Department of Agriculture came into existence an arrangement was made to engage in the service of the Department the agents of the Society who had been employed in giving the instruction necessary to advance its objects. Accordingly, in July, 1900, the Agricultural Board

Irish Agricultural Organisation Society.

resolved.—“That the agricultural instruction now carried out by the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society may be taken over by the Department, and the experts engaged in such instruction may be employed by them as from April 1, 1900, to such extent and subject to such conditions as the Department may approve.” In April, 1902, it was stated to the Board by the Vice-President that the operations of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society were extending rapidly, that it then comprised 625 societies representing about 60,000 farmers, and that no organisation was comparable to the Societies for enabling the Department to reach the individual farmer. It was further stated that the work of the Society was much hampered by want of funds. In fact since the establishment of the Department voluntary contributions rapidly fell off.

In 1905 the question as to the relations between the Department and the Society again came under the consideration of the Agricultural Board. It seems that some payments had been made to the Society for agricultural and other instruction, and also for expenses incurred by the Society for the Department, and a committee of representatives of the Department and of the Society had been formed to prepare a scheme for placing their relations on a more definite footing. It was proposed that the Department should contribute a lump sum to the Society to be administered in accordance with a scheme to be submitted annually for the approval of the Department.

There was considerable difference of opinion upon the Board whether it was wise for the Department itself to undertake the work carried on by the I.A.O.S., or to subscribe to the Society in the manner proposed. Finally the question was adjourned for further consideration. At a subsequent meeting of the Board, in February, 1905, after some discussion, it was unanimously agreed that an experimental scheme, submitted by the Vice-President, should be tried for one year. By this scheme the Department was to have two representatives upon the executive committee of the Society, and to contribute £2,000 to the funds of the Society to be applied to the use of organising (a) Credit Societies, (b) Co-operative Live Stock Insurance Societies, (c) Co-operative Home Industries Societies.

In February, 1906, the question again came forward with reference to the arrangements between the Society and the Department for 1905-7. It appears that the funds of the Society were now at so low an ebb that the estimate for the coming year showed a deficiency, in the absence of any aid from the Department, of £3,650. The Vice-President proposed that this deficiency should be met by a grant of the required amount. There was a discussion disclosing some difference of opinion amongst the members of the Board. Eventually the resolution, already quoted in another connection, was passed unanimously, whereby a sum of £3,700 was voted for the purpose required for the year 1906, on certain conditions which are set out in the Appendix. It was further resolved that before considering any further contributions the opinion of the Council of Agriculture should be requested as to the best method of aiding Agricultural organisation in the future. The question came before the Council of Agriculture in May, 1906, and was adjourned to the meeting in November, when, after a full discussion, an amendment to a resolution proposing the discontinuance of the grant was carried by fifty-two votes to twenty-five. The terms of the amendment were as follows :—

“This meeting of the Council, having regard to the unanimous resolution of the Council Meeting of 16th May, expressing the opinion that it is desirable that the Department should promote agricultural organisation and provide the funds necessary for the purpose, recommends that the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, which is the only existing body having a special knowledge of this work, should be aided in carrying out an approved scheme of agricultural organisation, subject to effective supervision of all expenditure in connection therewith by the Department, and that, with a view to stimulating contributions from Societies and subscribers, and thus securing greater economy as well as evoking a greater measure of local effort, the subsidy granted by the Department should be in the form of a *pro rata* contribution.”

This amendment was put as a substantive motion, and adopted without a division.

While, therefore, there is apparently no difference of opinion in the Council of Agriculture as to the great need of some system of agricultural organisation for the purposes above-mentioned, there is an acute difference as to whether the work of organisation should be carried out directly by the Department, or whether, for the present at all events, the work should be

Appendix LXVIII.

Paragraph 29

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carried on by the Organisation Society receiving pecuniary assistance from the Department upon the conditions laid down by the Council, the most important of which is that the subsidy granted by the Department should be based upon the *pro rata* principle. This question appears to be settled for the present by the decision of the Council of Agriculture.

A large amount of evidence was given before us both in favour of* and adverse to† the policy and proceedings of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, and the pecuniary assistance which, as above explained, has from time to time been rendered by the Department to the Society, has been made a ground for attack upon the Department.‡ A correspondence will be found in the Appendix disclosing a difference of recollection between Mr. Gerald Balfour and Mr. John Dillon, M.P., and to the intention and effect of the acceptance by Mr. Gerald Balfour, when the Bill of 1899 was in Committee of the House of Commons, of an amendment moved by Mr. Dillon, striking out the express sanction contained in the Bill of the application of the endowment of the Department to financing such associations as the Irish Organisation Society. There does not, however, appear to be any provision in the Act which precludes the Department from contributing out of its endowment to the funds of the Irish Organisation Society. The question is entirely one of policy, and seems to be peculiarly one on which the opinion of the Council of Agriculture should carry determining weight.

Appendix LII.

A full statement of the nature and object of the work of agricultural organisation and of its vital importance to Irish agriculture, and a discussion of the reasons in favour of and against the carrying on of this work by the agency of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, or by the direct action of the Department, will be found in a Memorandum by Sir Horace Plunkett, dated November 15th, 1906, circulated to the members of the Council of Agriculture, and set out in the Appendix.

Appendix XXX.

119. One of the main questions dealt with by the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society is, as has already been pointed out, the organisation of a system of agricultural credit. Professor Campbell referred, in a passage already quoted, to the existing system of credit as one of the worst possible description, and said that it was one of the principal difficulties which the Department had to contend with. Mr. G. W. Russell, the Superintendent of the Agricultural Credit Organisation, gave interesting evidence as to his branch of the work of the Society. Credit is a necessity to the small farmer, and it is the small farmer who has the greatest difficulty in finding adequate security, and consequently has to pay most dearly for the requisite accommodation. Mr. Russell quoted a particular case which he could not regard as other than typical—where a loan of £5 obtained from a high class bank cost the farmer, including the expenses of obtaining and retaining (for the purpose of renewal) the necessary sureties, no less than 42 per cent. A system known by the name of its author, Raffeisen, a Prussian, and largely adopted on the Continent, has prevailed widely in Ireland, and has been hitherto very successful. A number of farmers, in a comparatively small area, form themselves into a society, which is registered under the Friendly Societies' Acts on the principle of unlimited liability. The district within which the Society operates, and the number of members, is not larger than is consistent with all the members of the Association being well known to each other. No one is permitted to join the Society who is known to be drunken or thriftless, or otherwise objectionable in point of character. The Society commences operations by borrowing a small sum, say, £100. As the liability of the members is unlimited, and there is the practical guarantee of character above referred to, the Society has usually little difficulty in obtaining a loan at three or four per cent. The Department, for instance, often makes advances at three per cent. Frequently an overdraft is granted by a bank. The money thus borrowed is utilised for small loans at five per cent. Various arrangements made for securing and facilitating repayment are detailed by Mr. Russell. No attempt is made to earn a profit. The

Agricultural
Credit—
Paragraph 24.

Russell, 14442.

14444.

14445

14449.

14457.

* Rev. T. A. Finlay, 3552-3; Montgomery, 3388-91; Reeves, 13079-102; Small, 10274; McClure, 10309; Lockhart, 10220-4; Meehan, Rev. J., 7023; Quin, Rev. B., 6309; Rusha, 10168-9. (See also Appendix LII.)

† M'Donnell, 5759; Cleave, 5450; Shaw, 5812.

‡ Vaughan, 5703; Lough, 12306-8; Hees, 10737-31; M'Donald, 4676-80; Shaw, 5812, 5815-7; M'Donnell, 5759; M'Inerney, 5867; Brennan, 11324.

officials are unpaid, and any difference between the rate of interest obtained upon loans to members and that paid to the original lender of the capital sum is utilised for increasing the amount available for loans. Mr. Russell gave some figures as to the growth of the system. The first of these small banks in Ireland was organised in 1895. In 1906 there were 246. The statistics for 1905 were as follows:—

Russell, 34499.

AGRICULTURAL BANK STATISTICS FOR 1905.

Total number of Banks,	...	...	231
Membership,	...	...	15,035
Loan Capital and Deposits,	...	...	£33,438
Number of Loans granted,	...	...	7,453
Amount of Loans,	...	...	£43,741
Working Expenses,	...	...	£185 12 6
Net Profit,	...	...	£431 8 5
Reserve Fund,	...	...	£1,717 17 10

There were, in addition, twenty-five banks which had not sent in returns.

These banks are organised for assistance to the poorer class of farmers, and great success is claimed for them, especially in the poorest districts of the West of Ireland. An essential condition of their success is the honesty and good faith of the members of the Societies. Mr. Russell is able to say:—

"During the ten years agricultural banks have been in existence in Ireland, in no single case has a call been made on the members on the score of joint and several liability."

At present the action of the Department in connection with agricultural credit has consisted mainly in lending money to Societies of the Raiffeisen type. Mr. Gill, however, the Secretary of the Department, would like to see the land improvement loans, at present under the control of the Board of Works, transferred to the Department, at all events administered in "close connection with the system of our agricultural experts through the country, who ought to be the proper advisers of the farmers on the one hand and the leading department on the other." Mr. Gill's suggestion is an important one, and deserves careful consideration.

Mr. Montgomery, who has extensive knowledge of the working of previous systems of agricultural credit in Continental countries, considers that for the establishment of a system really adapted to the needs of a country of small cultivators, financial assistance by the Government is necessary, and gives a most interesting account of the aid given for this purpose in various foreign countries. He advocates that a similar course should be taken in Ireland, and is of opinion that a system of financial aid by loans to agriculture of an effective kind could be organised on sound financial principles; he thinks that the experience of other countries confirms this view.

120. We concur in the view that the establishment of a sound system of agricultural credit, whereby a small farmer may obtain small loans at a moderate interest, is of the most essential importance to agriculture, and that the experience both of Ireland and of other countries points to the possibility of the establishment of such a system. At present, great as has been the success of the societies organised by the L.A.O.S., a far more comprehensive system seems required, and could only be organised, if at all, by the aid of the State, after a very careful inquiry both as regards the principles and details of the scheme. We are satisfied that if such a scheme is to be successful, and the evidence before us leads us to think it practicable, it must be based on sound economic principles. We believe that such State aid would be one of the most effective and useful forms of assistance to agriculture.

121. Another mode of assistance to agriculture contemplated by the Act of 1899 is by improving transit facilities. Section 30 of the Act of 1899 expressly includes in the expression "the purposes of agriculture and other rural industries," the "aiding or facilitating of the carriage and distribution of produce," and Section 17 provides—

The Department may take such steps as they think proper—

(a) for appearing as complainant on behalf of any persons aggrieved in reference to any matter (other than a matter affecting the Postmaster General) which the Railway and Canal Commissioners have jurisdiction to hear and determine.

Transit.

122. In order to carry out its powers given by the Act the Department availed itself of the services of two inspectors who were already employed under the Diseases of Animals Acts, the administration of which was by Section 2 transferred to the Department. These inspectors had wide experience in transit work—looking after ships and railway trucks—and it was therefore considered that it would be better to strengthen this staff than to have another staff of inspectors. It is the duty of the inspectors to see to the methods of conveyance not only of live stock, but also of articles such as butter and eggs, and the handling of produce generally so as to avoid as much as possible damage in transit. Large butter and egg merchants are visited, and the nature of any complaints they have to make is ascertained. The railway companies afford all possible facilities for the Department's inspectors, and it is stated that the result of their operations is an important diminution in the claims for compensation for goods damaged in transit. Special complaints are investigated, but the main business of the inspectors is to improve methods of transit. It is said that the inspectors' influence has often been felt in obtaining acceleration of trains, increased number of steamships provided with refrigerating compartments between Liverpool, Cork, and Waterford, and obtaining refrigerator vans on railways.

Transit Inspectors.
See paragraph 215.
Cantrell, 3236-37.

3237.

President, 16314-23.
Cantrell, 3238.

123. There is only one case of action having been taken by the Department under Section 17. In that case the Department appeared in opposition to a general rise of rates on a particular railway. The railway company abandoned the proposed rise. The intervention of the Department cost it £1,000. It is obvious that the power given by Section 17 can only be used in exceptional cases, where some general interest is involved. But the possession of such a power gives the Department a *locus standi* for making representations to railway companies, which it would not otherwise possess. Mr. Cantrell, the Chief Clerk of the Department, who superintends this branch of its business, told us that at the end of 1905 there had been 134 complaints made to the Department in regard to railway rates on the ground of their excessive character or otherwise, and that in forty-three of these cases the companies were induced to grant reduced or through rates, in twenty-five refunds of rates paid were made, and nine or ten cases were still pending.

Action under Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1888.

3239.

3240.

Many witnesses complained of the hindrance to agriculture owing to the cost of transit by railway.* The Department has no jurisdiction other than that already referred to in reference to this matter, and the whole question as to the causes which "have retarded the expansion of traffic upon the Irish lines, and their full utilisation for the development of the agricultural and industrial resources of the country," is at the present time the subject of inquiry by a Vice-Regal Commission. A similar question is also now under the consideration of the Royal Commission on Canal Traffic.

124. In November, 1905, a deputation of traders waited upon the Vice-President and asked for the appointment of an officer, to reside in Great Britain, to look after the interests of Irish agricultural produce. In January, 1906, one of the Transit Inspectors of the Department, Lord Ikerrin, was appointed for this purpose. His principal duty is to detect frauds in connection with the sale of Irish butter, eggs, bacon, or other produce. Lord Ikerrin gave us some interesting information as to practices believed to be more or less prevalent of selling an inferior article consisting of foreign fats, such as margarine, as Irish butter, and of the steps which are being taken to counteract frauds of this kind. There is also said to be much fraud in the sale of cheap foreign eggs as Irish. He has also investigated the complaints by English merchants of supplies of Irish produce being deficient in weight and quality with a view of testing whether the complaint is well founded, and, if so, to what cause the defective supply is due—whether to the default of the producer or to damage in transit. It is also part of this officer's duty to report to the Department any information as to marketing Irish produce which may be of use to the Irish producer. He has no compulsory powers. The work has been going on for too short a time to enable us to form any opinion as to the

Officer resident in England.

Ikerrin, 16321.

16374-16376.

16375.

16382.

* Egan, Rev. M., 5328; Hynds, 6204; Lee, Rev. T., 5326; Egan, 11033-5; Fennell, 10320; Whelan (App. LVIII.).

results which may be expected from it. It appears consistent with the practice of Denmark and other foreign countries to have an officer residing in England to look after the interests of the trade of the producing country, and Lord Ikerrin appears to justify this step as an experiment in the interests of Irish trade. The Department will, in a year or two, be able to judge better than now whether the present practice is attended with such beneficial results as to justify its continuance.

3. APPLICATION OF THE METHODS OF THE DEPARTMENT TO THE CONGESTED DISTRICTS OF IRELAND.

125. Section 18 of the Act of 1899 (subsequently repealed) was in the following terms:—

"The Department may at the request of the Congested Districts Board for Ireland exercise and discharge any of the powers and duties of that Board in or in relation to a congested districts county, where the expenses thereby incurred are defrayed out of money provided by that Board or by local authorities or from other local sources; but no money placed at the disposal of the Department by this part of this Act shall be applied in or in relation to a congested districts county."

The Congested Districts Board was established by the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1891, section 34. A "Congested districts county" was by section 36 (1) of that Act constituted where, at the commencement of the Act, 20 per cent. of the population of a county lived in electoral divisions of which the total rateable value, when divided by the number of the population, gave a sum of less than £1 10s. for each individual. Where this state of things existed the electoral divisions were, for the purposes of the Act, separated from the county in which they were geographically situated and formed into a separate county called a congested districts county. The electoral divisions where the conditions were as above described, together with any addition or minus any extension made under powers given by section 36 (2), constituted what has since been technically known as the Congested Districts. With the exception of relatively small portions of counties Cork and Clare, the congested districts or areas thus formed were situated in the seven counties of Donegal, Leitrim, Roscommon, Sligo, Mayo, Galway and Kerry. The effect, therefore, of the above provisions, so long as section 18 of the Act of 1899 was in force, was that no portion of the Endowment Fund of the Department could be spent in a "congested districts county."

Local authorities have powers under the various Acts affecting technical instruction to raise a rate for the purposes of the Act of 1899 over a rural district. But here again a difficulty arose, for the rural district was not co-extensive with the electoral district which formed the unit of the congested area. There might be a rural district wholly non-congested, or wholly congested. In that case no difficulty arose, because the rate could be raised over and applied in the whole of the former district, but not at all in the latter. The difficulty was serious in rural districts where part was congested and part not. An endeavour was made by the Department and the Congested Districts Board to get over the difficulty arising from the statutory incapacity of the Department to expend any part of the joint fund in partly congested districts by an arrangement described by Professor Campbell. In some districts "both the Department and the Congested Districts Board were at work. The confusion became serious. The county committees could not understand what they were about, and the people were wholly mystified by these proceedings, and it had the effect of acting to the detriment of our work for many years."

To put an end to this confusion the Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1902, was passed, empowering the Council of any county containing the whole or part of a congested districts area to exclude the congested portion of the county from the rateable area. This Act, however, though still in force, has not been acted on, having been practically superseded in the next year by Section 85 of the Irish Land Act, 1903, by which section 18 of the Act of 1899, set out above, was repealed, thus removing any legal difficulty in the Department expending its endowment fund with the concurrence of the Agricultural Board in congested as well as in non-congested areas.

126. The reasons for the repeal of Section 18 of the Act of 1899, were stated in a memorandum addressed by Mr. Wyndham, then Chief Secretary, to the Vice-President, dated October 13, 1903. After stating that it was the policy of the Government that the time and resources of the Congested Districts Board should be concentrated on land purchase with special regard to the relief of congestion by migration, amalgamation of economic holdings and cognate measures, Mr. Wyndham proceeded:—

Transfer of agricultural work in congested districts to Department.

Minutes of Evidence, 1904.

"Parliament, therefore, decided in effect that the barriers between the scheduled Congested Districts and the rest of Ireland should not in future prohibit the gradual transfer from the Congested Districts Board to the new Department of such work as the latter might advantageously undertake and finance with the aid of local contributions with a view to the liberation of the time and resources of the Congested Districts Board and their closer concentration on the primary work of purchase and the relief of congestion.

"By using this phrase I am not to be understood as minimising the importance and necessity of the work carried out by the new Department. Excellent alike in conception and execution, it has been attended by a success which reflects high credit on all concerned. It is secondary only in order of time and in the sense that it will fluctuate more largely when superimposed on the primary work of purchase and the relief of congestion. In this appreciation of the aims and achievement of the Department I desire to include the Council of Agriculture which has supported its policy and the Agricultural and Technical Instruction Boards which have provided the necessary funds for its execution.

"For the present I propose that the Agricultural Department should take over the scheduled Congested Districts in respect only of their agricultural schemes. To accompany this transfer by a large diversion of income from the Congested Districts Board would be unnecessary and destructive of the general policy which must be pursued.

"As the primary work of the Congested Districts Board is completed it will be possible and proper to liberate its funds in aid of the secondary work of the Department. In the meantime the Board will be willing to supplement the work of the Department where special cases of widespread poverty call for special assistance. In addition to such special assistance in respect of agricultural schemes the scheduled districts will still enjoy exceptional assistance in respect of industries and fishing quite apart from the greater facilities for purchase and the relief of congestion afforded by the Land Act of 1903. They will, however, surrender in respect of agricultural schemes a part of their right to preferential treatment. It is proper that the Congested Districts Board should, in common with the other Department, effect some economy to push forward the primary work in which I have more than once referred.

"It is also fitting that the Agricultural Department should make, and the Agricultural Board should concur, in a contribution to the same object by undertaking labours in a somewhat larger field. I do not, however, suggest that the transfer should be effected without any financial assistance. I propose that the Agricultural Department should take over, free of charge, the stud, stallions, bulls, etc., now owned by the Congested Districts Board, and that the Congested Districts Board should direct to the Department a sum of £2,000 per annum.

"The proposed transfer will not deplete the savings effected by the Agricultural Department or frustrate the policy it has pursued. For, as the primary work of the Congested Districts Board is completed, further funds will be available for pushing on the secondary work of agriculture and technical instruction on a secure foundation.

127. It was evident, in view of the large amount which had been spent on the work proposed to be transferred by the Congested Districts Board up to the date of the transfer, that Mr. Wyndham's suggestion would involve a larger expenditure out of the endowment of the Department than would be met by the proposed annual contribution of £2,000. Accordingly, at a meeting of the Agricultural Board, in November, 1903, the matter was discussed, and the Vice-President proposed that the Board should sanction the expenditure of £5,000 in connection with the arrangement in question. The Board concurred, and expressed their cordial approval of the scheme suggested by the Chief Secretary, but placed on record their feeling that, whereas the Endowment Fund was intended by Parliament to be applicable exclusively to the non-congested areas of the country, and whereas the expenditure in connection with the new work about to be taken over from the Congested Districts Board must materially intrench on that fund, the deficit, in the interests of the rest of the country, should be recouped at the earliest possible date, in the manner referred to in the Chief Secretary's memorandum, or otherwise.

Financial Arrangements.

128. At a meeting of the Board in March, 1904, the Vice-President stated that the Department did not propose to effect at the outset any radical change in the methods adopted by the Congested Districts Board. Such changes as seemed desirable would be introduced gradually.

Agricultural work of Congested Districts Board.

In order to explain the methods employed by the Department in the congested districts after the transfer of the agricultural work of the Congested Districts Board, and to consider whether they are well suited to the conditions of that portion of Ireland, it is necessary to refer briefly to the agricultural work done in these districts previously to 1904. This was described to us by Mr. Thomas Porter, who was formerly Agricultural Superintendent of the Land Commission. This branch of the Land Commission was transferred to the Department of Agriculture in 1899, and Mr. Porter and the staff were transferred at the same time. Previous to this, while still at the Land Commission, Mr. Porter had the superintendence and carrying out of the agricultural schemes of the Congested Districts Board, and by arrangement between the Congested Districts Board and the Agricultural Board he continued this work for the Congested Districts Board until the transfer above explained, when he became one of the Inspectors of Agriculture of the Department. These details are mentioned because there seems to have been some strange misconception with regard to the appointment of Mr. Porter by the Department of Agriculture, and his salary.* He was transferred, as above stated, and, of course, took with him the salary which he was receiving in the post from which he was transferred and which has not since been altered.

It appears that the main difference between the system carried out by the Congested Districts Board and that by the Department was that under the *regime* of the Board the administration of the system and disposal of the funds were vested entirely in the central authority; this, indeed, was inevitable. In the first years of the existence of the Board there were no elective local authorities in existence.

During the twelve years covered by Mr. Porter's evidence the Board placed 72 stallions and 1,026 bulls in the congested districts for service. The stallions remained the property of the Board, and a small fee was charged for their use. The bulls were usually sold to farmers for two-thirds of their cost on a system of deferred payments, with an obligation on the purchaser to keep the bulls two years, subsequently extended to three. In the twelve years the loss to the Board on the 1,026 bulls was £21,679. A similar method was adopted for the supply of rams, boars, sows, and poultry. In each case well-bred animals and fowls were supplied. In the case of poultry the plan adopted was to place small flocks of pure breeds with suitable people, who were to give eggs to small occupiers who applied for them.

"At first the Board paid one penny for each egg given out; after some years that was reduced to one halfpenny, and eventually nothing was paid, but instead a small bonus was given varying from 30s. to £3 or £2 10s. That was really the best principle, because the other way always tended more or less to fraud, which it was very difficult to keep in check."

Mr. Porter is "sorry to say he thinks the scheme did not do good." He excepts Donegal, where the Board went to considerable expense to improve the breed of poultry. He states that the Board in 1897 had 65 poultry farms, and issued about 65,000 eggs; in 1898 the corresponding figures were 88 farms, and 98,000 eggs; in 1900, 130,000 eggs were issued.

The Board usually had about eight or ten agricultural instructors stationed at suitable places in the congested districts. The duties of the instructors were somewhat similar to those of the county committee instructors under the Act of 1899. Each instructor had a large district to look after in which he controlled the working of example holdings, example plots, and experimental plots, but he carried on his stock inspection in an extended district. These instructors "were not men who had passed through a course of scientific agriculture, they were simply men we believed to be good agriculturists; they were the class of men, roughly speaking, who would have made good land stewards or farm bailiffs." A good many of them were Scotch.

One of the principal duties of the instructors was to instruct the people in potato spraying. The utility of potato spraying was quickly recognised, but, notwithstanding, there is, Mr. Porter tells us, great difficulty in getting the people to do it. After a good year when there has been no disease, they are very apt to neglect spraying the following year. There are every year a number of spraying machines not used for want of trivial repairs. The indifference of the people to precautions, the necessity of which they know so well, is "a curious thing."

* *Ibid.*, 10144-59; *Taylor*, 9343-63; *Doelling*, *Rev. P. J.*, 15566-63.

123. The transition from the system to which the congested districts had been accustomed of receiving pecuniary assistance direct from the central authority, to that of the Department under which the working of county schemes was in the hands of the local authority—the committee of the county council—was by no means easy. A large sum, stated to have been about £11,000 per annum, had been expended by the Congested Districts Board previous to the transfer, upon the work in respect of which the Board, after 1903, contributed only £2,000.

Action of the Department.

Doran, 18954.

The Department and the committees of county councils endeavoured in various ways to meet the needs of the congested districts. In the counties containing congested district areas the Department raised its contribution to the rates from 1½d. to 1¼d. In this way, for every pound raised by the rates the Department contributed to counties containing congested districts 30s. as against 25s. to other counties. In the seven counties the number of premium bulls under the county schemes was increased from 99 in 1903 to 143 in 1904 (the year the work was taken over), 154 in 1905, and 157 in 1906. The corresponding figures of nominations for mares are 453, 664, 793, and 849; for premium boars, 44, 51, 92, and 118; for egg stations, 38, 77, 107, and 123.

Campbell, 18290.

15292

18297.

The county committees endeavoured as far as possible to spread their schemes over the whole county. The increases shown under the county schemes after 1903 were mainly due to the extension of their operations to the congested districts. The Department however found it necessary to supplement the county schemes by aid given to these districts directly from the Endowment Fund.

In 1904, in addition to the premium bulls under the county schemes, the Department allocated eight additional bulls, in 1905, 33, and in 1906, 74. In 1905, 10 additional boars were supplied, in 1906, 23. There have also been a number of rams, asses, and horses supplied in a similar manner, and these animals were dealt with in the same manner as under the county schemes. They were on offer to the farmers of the district for purchase at a low rate, with the facilities for advancing the purchase money which has been before explained.

15297.

1772-96.

1820-3.

In the administration of these supplemental schemes the Department did not draw a hard and fast line between the districts which fell within the definition contained in the Act of 1891 above quoted, and the adjoining districts, which, though not technically congested, were substantially in a similar condition of poverty. The instructions given to the Department's Inspectors with regard to the bulls are to see that they are reserved for the very poor districts, and that it was not necessary to insist that they should be located actually within the area technically called congested. This scheme, however, operates mainly in the congested counties, and within or on the borders of the congested area. A few bulls are, however, placed in a similar manner independently of the county schemes, where there is a similar need, in the Glens of Antrim and Rathlin Island. Any bulls placed on or near the border of a congested district would be available for use both inside and outside the congested district for the specially poor classes of people for whose assistance the congested district arrangements are intended.

16418.

16417.

16423.

Mr. Doran, a witness of high authority (Chief Land Inspector of the Congested Districts Board), considers that both the Congested Districts Board and the Department have been mistaken in confining themselves too exclusively to the use of pedigree bulls in the congested districts. He takes the same view with regard to horses, asses, and poultry. With regard to bulls he would not place in the poorer districts high-bred pedigree bulls of the Shorthorn, or even of the Aberdeen Angus, or Galloway breeds. The Shorthorn he considers not suitable for the congested districts at all; the Aberdeen Angus are suitable for the better parts of the congested districts, and the Galloways for the poorest, but not if taken from herds brought to a high state of perfection by forced feeding and extra care. The offspring of such high-bred cattle will, in Mr. Doran's opinion, not thrive, and many will not live on the poor badly-farmed holdings in the congested districts. These views, Mr. Doran told us, had been brought before the Congested Districts Board by him in his reports, but apparently that Board continued to do exactly what the Department is doing.

15735-46.

15750-8

15742.

15750.

Suitability of
pedigree stock
to congested
areas,
16458.

130. There seems, in fact, to be a difference of opinion between high authorities as to whether pedigree stock is or is not suitable for districts, whose backward condition makes it difficult for the owner of the sire to feed him sufficiently well. On the other hand, Professor Campbell points out that the Department finds "no difficulty whatever in getting people to take up these bulls. You will see the great increase that is going on."

The question of the comparative advantages of encouraging the use for breeding purposes of pure-bred stock only has been already referred to. One of the difficulties of departing from this principle is to find any other sufficient and workable test.

Suggested
alternative
methods in
congested
districts,
13812.

131. Mr. Doran gives the following picture of the causes of the poverty of the poor agriculturist of the congested districts:—

"One of the most frequent primary causes of their poverty is want of sufficient manure to grow crops and keep their land in a productive state. Good tillage farming is impossible without adequate manuring. Bad land cannot be permanently improved without good cultivation and manuring. The small farmer here rarely tries to grow any crop except one Irish acre of potatoes, the same extent of oats, a plot of cabbage, and occasionally a small plot of turnips. The cow or two he keeps are allowed to live as best they can in summer on the poor pasture of worn out land, and in winter they are barely kept alive on the bad fare they get, consisting of straw and inferior hay, without roots. His cattle are seldom thrifty or profitable, and those he sells are disposed of at low prices. It requires a powerful influence to induce the people to change their customs or to do anything for themselves in a different manner to that in which they always saw it done. But if a master operand can be applied to them which will create a general desire to work to improve their position, give them hope in their own efforts, and engender such a spirit of emulation as will cause them to vie with each other in the improvement of their land and their homes, general poverty will disappear from many of these districts. It will not be sufficient to enumerate their faults and failings and point out the remedy. All defects in their agricultural methods do not arise from ignorance. Thousands of migratory labourers work year after year with the farmers in England, on perhaps the best farmed land in the world, and yet they do not, and with resources now at their command, could not imitate the English system of culture on their own holdings."

Mr. Doran goes on to explain in detail his suggestions for remedying this state of things, which, in his opinion, both the Congested Districts Board and the Department have hitherto failed adequately to cope with.

"15824. I attribute the failure to bring about any apparent improvement in the agricultural conditions of the congested districts to the employment of itinerant instructors, who were placed in charge of such large districts that it was not possible for them to give the attention and assistance to any particular locality which was necessary in order to induce the poor landholders to follow their advice and instructions. The men employed appeared to be highly trained agriculturists."

"15825. (Chairman).—You are speaking now of the methods of the Board, as well as of the Department?—Yes, and its relation to the Department. I cannot separate the two."

"15826. You cover both and you are not suggesting that any particular alteration was made by the Department?—The fault, I find, is that the Department has followed the same."

13012.

Mr. Doran, states that something like £140,000 has been spent on the agricultural schemes of the Congested Districts Board, with, "comparatively speaking, little improvement effected." His alternative plan is in its main features as follows:—(1) To substitute for the itinerant instructor "district agriculturists to teach the farmers to cultivate their holdings in the best manner"; and (2) "To make the teaching of agriculture a compulsory subject in rural National Schools, and in connection with this it would be advisable, where practicable, to have attached to each school in the country districts a school farm or a school garden, or both." Mr. Doran makes other main suggestions as to the means of improvement of agriculture, and, amongst others, emphasises the need of organisation, both for purposes of supply and marketing. With regard to Mr. Doran's suggestion as to the employment of district agriculturists instead of itinerant instructors, if we understand his views correctly, it seems to be as follows:—He suggests that a number of "intelligent successful small farmers or trained agriculturists, to be called district agriculturists," should be selected, and that to each one of these should be allotted a district not larger than he could closely supervise in connection with the general agricultural development of the district. He would be the agricultural instructor of the district. He would be "a local man." Later in his evidence Mr. Doran gives a description

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15855-56

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12487

* See figures on previous page, par. 123. We cannot agree with Mr. Doran's criticisms of these figures, 15745, et seq. Inferences drawn from the application of the system of averages to a new method in its early stages seem to us liable to be fallacious.

of the nature of the work he would do, of which organisation for supply of seeds and manures and other requisites would form a considerable part. He should live on a farm in his district, apparently either his own or one supplied by the Department, and should keep suitable breeding stock for the locality. He should have as foreman or assistant a young man who had passed through his theoretical course, and has to acquire practical experience under him to qualify for the office of instructor.

Mr. Doran suggests that "one highly qualified man with scientific and practical knowledge be placed in charge of each county, and that in each parish the most enterprising and successful farmer, or a son of his, be selected to manage his farm as an example holding, and to act as district agriculturist." Mr. Doran thought that there would be no difficulty in finding a suitable man for this purpose in any parish. If Mr. Doran's plan were carried out in its entirety about 280 "district agriculturists" would be required. The farm should be, if necessary, supplied at the expense of Imperial funds. Mr. Doran was not prepared to give an estimate of the total cost, and has not furnished us since with any information on the subject. He stated, however, that apart from capital expenditure, each centre could not be maintained under £100 annual expenditure.

The other point suggested by Mr. Doran, referred to above is:—

"To make the teaching of agriculture a compulsory subject in rural National Schools, and for this purpose have attached to each school in country districts a school farm and garden."

With regard to the attaching of school gardens to National Schools there is very general concurrence in this view. The subject has been already discussed. The question of the compulsory teaching of agriculture and the provision of school farms stands on a very different footing. We have already referred to the experience of the provision and working of school farms. Mr. Doran's suggestion is to give the Department powers to acquire any area of land up to the rateable value of £10. He thinks, however, that the "farm should be a small one, of about up to £5 value." The teacher would be the manager of the farm. If not too old, he "should be obliged to take up a science course similar to that now required for the agricultural instructors."

The schoolmaster would work the farm himself in afternoons after school hours, and on Saturdays, and would employ what other labour was necessary. The children beginning, say, about ten years of age, would be taken out for about half an hour three times a week to work on the farm. The farm would be managed as an "example holding" for the neighbourhood. The schoolmaster would be allowed to take the profits of the farm for his own benefit.

Mr. Doran was asked several questions in order to test whether this plan could be made practicable consistently with the necessary arrangements of an elementary school. We cannot say that he satisfied us that, apart from the question of cost, the plan he proposed was a workable one, or likely to be attended with successful results.

As regards Mr. Doran's suggestion of substituting for the itinerant instructor the "district agriculturist," it is worth observing that though apparently a similar proposal was laid before the Congested Districts Board by Mr. Doran in April, 1892, no attempt appears to have been made by the Board to set upon it, even by way of experiment.

Mr. Doran's evidence was primarily confined to the special measures required by the circumstances of the congested districts. But if his view of the value of itinerant instruction, and of the desirability of establishing school farms is correct, his conclusions seem to be applicable to the whole of rural Ireland, and would involve a change of far-reaching character in the system of agricultural training.

132. We think that the evidence laid before us shows that Mr. Doran underrates—and to some extent misapprehends—the part which the system of itinerant instruction has played in relation to agriculture during the last four or five years. There is force in Mr. Doran's criticism that the drawback to this system is the difficulty of one man adequately satisfying the requirements of the large area he has to deal with, and the danger that lectures taken alone are apt not to be appreciated or understood by the persons to whom they are addressed. But Mr. Doran appears wholly to disregard the practical side of the work of the itinerant agricultural instructor with which we have dealt

Review of
alternative
proposals.

at length in the earlier part of this report. The evidence which is summarised in the Memorandum annexed to this Report appears to us, when fairly considered, to be inconsistent with Mr. Doran's view. The complaint of the local authorities is more frequently, not that the instruction is bad or useless, but that there is not enough of it, that instructors cannot be got, and that it is difficult to retain them. Considering the short time that any effective system of training of instructors has been at work, we think that the amount of success which the evidence shows that method to have attained is at once surprising and gratifying. We cannot see why a method which has been attended with a considerable degree of success in the poor districts of other parts of Ireland should fail in the congested districts. No doubt there are special difficulties. The transfer of the work had been in force little more than two years before the date of this Inquiry. It was a transfer to a Department possessed of smaller resources available for the purpose, and these resources mainly administered by the Local Authority instead of by the Central Body. A special cause of difficulty and unpopularity was thus created. But there is reason to think that those difficulties are being gradually overcome, and, given time, and with the adequate resources and such special arrangements as seem to be required to meet the special needs of these very poor districts, we see no reason why the methods of the Department should not succeed in the congested districts as in other parts of Ireland.

There is much force in Mr. Doran's argument that under present arrangements it is difficult for the members of the committee residing in remote parts of the western counties of Ireland, such as Belmullet in Mayo, to attend fixed meetings of the committee, and consequently that the special requirements of such places often are not brought sufficiently before the committee. Professor Campbell explained to us the measures which the Department is taking to meet difficulties of this kind by the encouragement of the formation of local committees in order that the special requirements of any district may be brought before the county committee and the Department. The Council of Agriculture also passed a resolution with this object on the 14th November, 1905. The Inspector of the Department who is charged with the administration of the special scheme has the special duty of dealing with the requirements of each district in such matters—for instance, as the location of bulls, and similar assistance.

Whether any power of delegation of functions to such local committees could be adopted is probably a question which may have to be dealt with when such committees have been longer established and their work is better understood; but it would, in our opinion, be premature to recommend the legislation which would be necessary for this purpose at present.

133. There remains the question as to whether the Department requires additional funds to enable it to deal adequately with the districts which are "congested" within the meaning of the Act of 1891. We think a strong case is made out for additional funds for this purpose. It must be remembered that the Congested Districts Board had, up to the transfer of the work in 1904, spent a sum, stated to be as much as £140,000, in agricultural schemes for the congested districts. At the time of the transfer the amount of expenditure was stated by Mr. Doran to be £11,000 per annum; under Mr. Wyndham's arrangement, the Department is in receipt of £2,000 per annum in respect of this work. In addition to this, there is so much of the Joint Fund as is applicable to the congested districts under the various county schemes. What we think the Department can fairly claim is that the Endowment Fund should be relieved of any expenditure which is reasonably required for supplementary schemes, in addition to the £2,000 per annum from the Congested Districts Board, and the amount applicable under the Joint Fund to the congested districts. We think that any supplemental grant of this kind should be subject to reconsideration at such intervals as would allow for the possible advance of these areas towards better conditions. We deal with this matter in more detail under the head Finance.

But after all it is a dreary prospect if the inhabitants of these districts are always to be dependent for the necessities of a proper standard of living upon Public Funds. A great effort is being made at present to place them in a con-

dition in which they will be no longer so dependent. With this effort—the increase and revision of the holdings—this Inquiry has nothing to do. It is, however, the duty of the Department to adopt the best methods of fitting the agriculturist to take advantage of his new opportunities. If he fails in this his last state may be worse than the first. So far as we can judge, the methods framed on the best practice of Continental countries, which are, in our opinion, working with satisfactory promise of success in other parts of Ireland, afford, if supplemented in the way we have described, the best prospect of meeting the needs of the congested districts. We cannot recommend that new and untried methods should be established in their place.

B

Other Rural Industries.

134. By Section 16 (1) (g) of the Act of 1899 the surplus of the Endowment Fund is, subject to the concurrence of the Agricultural Board, to be applied to the purposes of "Agriculture and other rural Industries or Sea Fisheries."

Definition of
Rural Industries.

Section 30 provides that the expression "the purposes of agriculture and other rural industries" includes the aiding, improving, and developing of agriculture, horticulture, forestry, dairying, the breeding of horses, cattle, and other live stock and poultry, home and cottage industries, the cultivation and preparation of flax, inland fisheries, and any industries immediately connected with and subservient to any of the said matters and any instruction relating thereto, and shall also include the aiding or facilitating of the carriage and distribution of produce.

The terms of this definition show that the enumeration of the various special industries in the sub-section is not intended to exclude other industries falling under the same category though not specially mentioned therein. But, according to the ordinary canons of the construction of an Act of Parliament, it seems that an industry to be within the terms of the section, and therefore qualified to receive aid, improvement, or development from the Endowment Fund, must be "immediately connected with and subservient to any of the matters previously mentioned." A good illustration of this is found in the box-making or fowl-trussing, and probably the jam, fruit-drying, and cider industries above referred to.

Paragraphs 101, 113.

We have already dealt specially with most of the matters mentioned in this section. Of these not hitherto touched on—Forestry, Home and Cottage Industries, and Inland Fisheries are the most important. Of these, by the organisation of the Department, Home and Cottage Industries fall under the Technical Instruction Branch, and will be referred to under that head.

Paragraphs 119-121.

135. Before considering how the powers of the Department for the aiding, improving, and developing of Forestry have, so far, been exercised, it is necessary to state shortly the position of the State with regard to Forestry previous to the passing of the Act of 1899. It is also necessary to bear in mind the distinction drawn by Professor Campbell between Forestry on a large scale, involving the planting and management of woods for profit, and the planting by occupiers for shelter and ornament.

Forestry.

135.

Prior to the establishment of the Department, the sole connection of the State with Forestry was through the Commissioners of Public Works and the Congested Districts Board.

136. It might be thought from their title that the Commissioners of Woods and Forests had something to do with Forestry in Ireland. No doubt they had powers in that direction, but in Ireland, at least, they were never exercised.

Commissioners
of Woods and
Forests.

By the Crown Land Act, 1829, certain properties and revenues of the Crown in England, Wales, and Ireland, including all forests, chases, woods, parks, &c., were placed under the management of the Commissioners of Woods. Powers were given to purchase lands and fuel rights, rights of common, or other rights extending over any lands, to sell possessions and revenues other than Royal forests, and to sell or exchange parts of forests under certain conditions. Sums arising from sales, exchanges, or leases in Royal forests were to be applied in purchase of such rights as above men-

tioned, and of any lands or other hereditaments in the forests and in maintaining the forests. Sums arising from sales, &c., other than of forests, were to be applied in the purchase of any manors, messuages, lands, or other hereditaments, and monies not immediately required for any of the purposes specified were to be invested as directed, and dividends to be applied in same manner as income. The income was to be applied in payment of the expenses of and attending the management of their possessions and land revenues and in other ways, and, subject to the applications specified, the surplus was to be paid to the King and his successors. Under subsequent legislation the surplus is paid into the Treasury. There were no Royal forests in Ireland which vested in the Commissioners of Woods under the Act of 1829, and, save as to the one instance next referred to, no lands appear to have been purchased by them in Ireland for Forestry or for any other purpose.

According to the last annual Report of the Commissioners, the yearly revenue from Ireland was £32,700, and for eight years ending 31st March, 1905, the capital sums received for redemption of Quit and Crown Rents was £118,725. It appears that none of the capital monies has been expended in Ireland, except £3,000 for the purchase of some land adjoining the Phoenix Park, and £1,200 for the redemption of a Head Rent near the Curragh.

137. The functions of the Commissioners of Public Works as regards Forestry were confined to making loans for improvements (including planting for shelter) to owners in fee and limited owners under Land Improvement Loans Acts; and, under the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881, § 31, to companies or to occupiers of land for improvements, among which, by § 20 of 46 and 47 Vict., c. 43, the planting of trees is to be included.

138. The powers given to the Congested Districts Board within the area of their operations were substantially the same as those conferred on the Department, and authorised them "to take such steps as they think proper for, amongst other things, 'aiding and developing forestry.'" The Congested Districts Board have mainly confined their efforts to the encouragement of planting for shelter by small occupiers. Only one attempt at Forestry on a large scale was made—the planting of Knockboy, which had been begun prior to the formation of the Congested Districts Board, and was continued by that body. For the reasons and under the circumstances mentioned by Mr. Porter, the project was not a success. This preliminary failure and the difficulty of dealing with the grazing and other rights extending over almost all the waste land suitable for planting, appear to have prevented further efforts in this direction by the Congested Districts Board.

139. The steps taken by the Department for aiding, improving, and developing forestry, so far, have been:—

1. The issue and distribution of leaflets on forestry subjects, such as the planting of waste lands, the proper method of planting forest trees, trees for poles and timber, trees for shelter and ornament, planting, management and preservation of shelter belts and hedge row timber, the management of plantations, felling and selling of timber, &c.

2. Special courses on forestry to agricultural and horticultural instructors to enable them to advise occupiers as to planting, and to superintend planting operations.

3. Distribution through county committees of forest trees at wholesale prices.

4. Establishment of a forestry station at Avondale for the training of foresters in practical forestry, and the appointment of a highly qualified expert principal whose services are available to visit districts in which planting is about to be undertaken by private owners or public bodies, and to help in the preparation of working plans and the management of woods.

5. The Department has appointed a Forestry Advisory Committee at the instance of the Agricultural Council, and the following resolutions were passed by that Committee:—

"That this Committee are of opinion that the work of afforestation in Ireland as a general Scheme for the country as a whole should be undertaken by or under the supervision of the State, and that the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction and the County Councils should

be provided with adequate funds and powers for the purpose. That this Committee endorse the suggestion made by the Council of Agriculture; that Irish Quit and Crown Rents should be utilised in forming a fund for the development of Forestry in Ireland; that the Committee are of opinion that special encouragement is justified in the case of private owners who undertake tree-planting, inasmuch as the profits of such planting, unlike the profits of ordinary crop cultivation, are enjoyed by succeeding generations, and not by the actual planters; that in order to give encouragement to private owners to undertake tree-planting such alterations should be made in the Land Improvement Act as will enable advances for planting to be made when such planting is for purposes other than shelter; that in case of such advances, and in order to secure, so far as possible, that the planting shall be of permanent value where the borrowers are prepared to carry out their planting under the advice and to submit their plantations to the periodic inspection of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, an abatement of interest on loans advanced for this purpose should be made during the period of the loan so long as the plantation is made to the satisfaction of the Department; that with a view to the preservation of existing plantations, the Committee are of opinion that amendments should be introduced into the Land Purchase Acts to the effect that plantations over a certain size, the limits to be determined by the Estates Commissioners, should be reserved from sale and vested in County Councils or other public authority, or if sold to tenants vested in them under restrictions as regards selling or injury."

The preservation of existing woods is a matter which calls for immediate attention, and we concur in the above suggestion of the Advisory Committee on this subject. The earliest opportunity should be taken of conferring on the Estates Commissioners the requisite powers and of giving to county councils the corresponding powers as mentioned in paragraph 141 below.

Preservation of existing Woods

140. The steps taken by the Department above detailed for the encouragement of planting by individuals appear to us to be on right lines and to be proceeding satisfactorily. We agree however, in the suggestion that the forestry leaflets might, with advantage, be of a more attractive and interesting character.

Private Planting.

Moore, 11940.

We are also of opinion that all restrictions which prevent the issue of loans to private owners for planting, when such planting is not merely for shelter, should be removed.

Loans for Planting.

Knappesbury, 3369, 3364.
Gill, 193.

It is a question well worthy of consideration whether the administration of loans for planting should not be vested in the Department of Agriculture instead of in the Board of Works as at present. Future planting by private owners will probably be undertaken under the advice either of the Department's Chief Forestry Expert or of the Agricultural or Horticultural Instructor, and it appears to be desirable that the authority under whose auspices planting will be undertaken, and which is, through its instructors, placed now in almost every county, in a position to supervise the operations of planting and the future care and management of the woods, should also be the authority responsible for the issue of the loans.

We learned in the course of our Inquiry that the services of the instructors are being extensively availed of by occupiers planting for shelter and ornament, and that in the year 1905 to 1906 alone half a million of trees had been supplied through the county committees.

Campbell, 1823.

141. The Irish Land Act, 1903, enables loans to be made to trustees approved of by the Land Commission in the case of the sale of an estate for the purchase of parcels thereof for the purpose, *inter alia*, of the planting of trees or the preservation of woods and plantations. The Department has obtained the opinion of the Law Officers that county councils may be trustees for the purposes of that section. This makes it possible for the council of any county, on the sale of an estate, to have vested in them parcels of land for planting, or if already planted for preservation, subject to a land purchase annuity as in the Act provided, upon such terms and conditions, and with such rights and powers as may be specified in a scheme passed by or approved of by the Lord Lieutenant.

Planting by public bodies.

Campbell, 1843

So far, Kildare is the only county which is taking advantage of these provisions, and negotiations have been proceeding for some time with a view to the acquisition of two parcels—one of about 500 acres (King's Bog Common) and the other of 100 acres (Brackney Wood)—for purposes of afforestation. The difficulties of dealing with the grazing and other rights of occupiers have, so far, prevented the realization of these projects, but one small wood of thirty-three acres (Loughtown), of which a free gift was made by the owners on the sale of the estate, has been already taken over by the council and is under its management.

We think the provisions of Sections 4 and 20 of the Irish Land Act, 1903, should be made expressly applicable to county councils, and that power should be given to make advances to those bodies, not only for the purchase of the land, but also for the capital expenditure in planting, fencing, and draining on the same terms as other advances for the purposes of that Act.

Afforestation

142. All the witnesses who have referred to the subject of forestry have concurred in urging the great necessity that exists in Ireland for State aid to afforestation, both on the larger and the lesser scale. The grounds put forward may be thus summarised—that Ireland, once rich in forests, is now denuded and bare of woods to a greater extent than any European country; that there is a comparatively vast area of little use for any other purpose which could be profitably utilised for timber; that benefits would ensue to climate, health and industrial employment; that it would tend to equalise temperature and rainfall, conserve moisture for springs and rivers, and prevent floods. It was also pointed out that, owing to the operation of land purchase, a process of further denudation is now going on by vendors of land before, and by purchasers after, the completion of the transfer.

Scott Kerr, 5078.

The report of the Departmental Committee appointed in 1902 to inquire into forestry in Great Britain (quoted in Mr. Scott Kerr's evidence)* applies with equal, if not greater, force to Ireland, by reason of its greater bareness of trees, its larger proportion of waste land suitable for planting, and the want of winter employment for so large a part of its rural population, whilst the conditions of soil and climate for the production of timber commercially valuable are at least as suitable. The witnesses representing the Irish Forestry Society manifested great impatience with the Department for not having sooner embarked upon a policy of afforestation upon a large scale. The report above referred to deprecates too much haste in instituting schemes of afforestation, and the case of Knockboy is an example of the evil which may be done by hasty or ill-considered action. The great obstacles, however, which have stood in the way of a policy of afforestation on a large scale are the want of sufficient funds and the absence of powers to purchase compulsorily the interests of tenants and the grazing and other rights of occupiers. The demands upon the Department's funds for purposes of more immediately practical importance to agriculture than forestry, and, above all, for agricultural education, are more than sufficient to exhaust the existing funds. Little land suitable for planting is available which is not affected by grazing or other rights of a character which can only be extinguished through the medium of compulsory powers, and if afforestation in Ireland is to be a reality the Department charged with the work must be supplied with sufficient funds specifically applicable to that object, and with ample power to deal with all rights affecting the land.

Campbell, 1827-41.

Avondale
Forestry Station.
Campbell, 1823

143. In anticipation of a demand for trained foresters, the Department has established a forestry station at Avondale (the residence and demesne of the late Mr. C. S. Parnell) for the training of young men as working foresters. Particulars as to the manner in which the lands and residence are being used and as to the course of instruction will be found in Professor Campbell's evidence. The Department is condemned by the Irish Forestry Society for its action in forming the School of Forestry on the grounds that the money so expended might be more profitably spent in sending candidates to Scotch, English, or German forest schools; that the instruction given is inadequate and premature; and that Avondale, with comparatively high-class, deep loam soil, is not a suitable locality for training men whose work is supposed to be on bog lands and mountains. Scotland has no school of forestry. In England there is nothing between Oxford University and Dean Forest school, which is on similar lines to Avondale. Oxford is only fitted for the highest grade instruction in theory. The language difficulty would be a barrier to sending Irish pupils to Germany. Moreover, the objection to Avondale by reason of the character of its soil, if it be a valid objection, which we think it is not, applies with equal force to English or German schools, and there would be in addition the difference of climate and environment from those on which the pupils work in Ireland.

* Parliamentary Paper [Cd. 1819.]

Scott Kerr, 5079.

would have to be done. As to the alleged inadequacy of the instruction, no grounds were given beyond the general statement of the witness. On the whole, we cannot endorse the strictures in this regard of the Forestry Society. If the valuable propagandist work which that Society is doing meets with the success which it deserves, there should be a vast increase in private and public planting, and a demand must consequently arise for the services of trained foresters. If the Department had failed to make provision for the supply of this demand with men trained in Ireland, the Society would have had a much more well-founded cause of complaint.

The general question of the need of a large expenditure of public money and the conditions of such expenditure for the afforestation of Ireland lie beyond the scope of the present Inquiry. It is not, in our opinion, possible that, with the means at present at the disposal of the Department and the multitude of claims upon its resources, it should undertake this work on a comprehensive scale.

We deal with Inland along with Sea Fisheries in the next head of this Report.

144. An important question has arisen—whether such industries as mining or quarrying fall within this sub-section—whether, in short, the Department is entitled to assist these industries—or whether the limits which are imposed with regard to technical instruction apply. If they are not within the above definition the Department is precluded from giving assistance otherwise than by means of technical instruction. This question appears to have arisen upon a project brought forward by the Department in 1902 for making loans in approved cases for industrial purposes. The immediate object seems to have been the starting of new industries in Ireland, especially in the rural districts.

Mining and Quarrying.

It appears to have been contemplated that for certain purposes, especially to supply the want of capital for the purchase of machinery, loans should be granted upon certain conditions laid down in the memorandum set out in the Appendix. The question was discussed by the Board. The opinion was generally expressed that the question of loans to individuals presented so many difficulties that it was not desirable to come to a decision on the point. It was found, on reference to the legal advisers of the Department, that the proposed system of loans was beyond the powers of the Department. The Department was advised that the industries which it was desired to assist, whether they were carried on in the country or not, were not rural industries within the meaning of the Act. This view would apparently apply to such industries as mining or quarrying. These industries, though carried on in the country districts, do not appear to fall within the terms of the definition in Section 30. Apparently the only assistance which, under the Act of 1899, the Department can render such industries is by way of technical instruction.

OM, 1144-22.

Appendix LXVII.

145. When it was ascertained that its powers were limited in the way indicated, the Department was anxious for legislation to delete the word "rural" in Section 16 (1) (g). If the word "rural" were struck out, by the combined operation of that sub-section and of the definition above quoted, the Act would empower the Department, with the concurrence of the Agricultural Board, to apply its Endowment Fund to the aiding, improving, and developing of industries generally, whether rural or urban.

Proposed amendment of Act. CM, 2263.

The question as to the desirability of giving such a large extension of powers to the Department, involving, if the powers were as freely exercised as the advocates of the proposal contemplate, a very large addition to the financial resources of the Department, has been much discussed before us, chiefly in connection with the provisions of the Act relating to Technical Instruction. Here it is enough to say that we are not prepared to recommend such an alteration of the Act as is suggested. There is no difference of opinion as to the great need of an extension and development of Irish industries. The doubt is—how far and within what limits it is possible or desirable for the Department to aid in their development by the employment of public funds.

146. The Act of 1899 has given very large powers to the Department as regards Agriculture and Industries cognate to Agriculture, and Sea Fisheries.

State assistance to Industries.

It has not gone to the same length as regards other industries. Ought this distinction to be removed, and the Department given a free hand as regards the latter class of industries as well as the former? In the case of Agriculture and Fisheries the question of pecuniary assistance by way of loans or otherwise has relation to an industry of a national character. The whole country is interested directly or indirectly in the prosperity of these great industries. Improvement in the breeds of cattle, in tillage, in butter-making, in the production and disposal of fruit, are matters of such general interest that they seem to be legitimate objects of State aid properly administered.

The object in this case is not to render special pecuniary assistance to any one individual or body of persons, but to raise the level of the whole industry by methods of general application, such as those we have endeavoured to describe.

The same object in the case of other industries might be attained by the establishment of a well-considered system of affording industrial credits under suitable safeguards. We have already expressed our opinion in favour of such a system in the case of agricultural credit, and we see no reason why it should not be equally applicable in the case of industries generally. If, however, this were carried out on the scale necessary, it should not, we think, be dealt with by a Department whose functions in relation to industries are essentially educational. We return to this question in dealing with that part of the Act which relates to Technical Instruction.

C.

Fisheries.

Provisions of Act
of 1899.

147. By Section 2 (1) (i) the powers and duties of the Inspectors of Irish Fisheries were transferred to the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction; and by Section 3, from the date of the transfer, the Inspectors were transferred and attached to the Department as officers thereof, and provision was made for assigning to one Inspector the performance of such of the duties under the existing Fisheries Acts as might be declared by an Order in Council of the Lord Lieutenant to be of a judicial character.

Inspectors of
Fisheries.

148. Under these provisions, set out in full in the Appendix, Mr. W. S. Green and Mr. D. H. Lane became Inspectors of Fisheries under the Department. Mr. Green acted as Chief Inspector, and was invested with the "judicial" duties above referred to.

Fishery
Legislation.

3034.

149. In 1842 the existing Irish Fisheries Acts were consolidated. Since the Consolidation Act of that year no less than 43 Acts have been passed affecting Irish Fisheries. Mr. Green would like to see another Consolidation Act passed.

Bye-laws.

3025.

3071.

3041-2.

3771.

3022.

3027.

150. Before the Act of 1899 the powers and duties of the Fishery Inspectors were to make bye-laws, rules, and regulations for the Fisheries, the collection of statistics, supervising the Boards of Conservators all through Ireland, and the enforcement of bye-laws and protection of the rivers. These powers continue as before, but are now exercised in the name of the Department. The responsibility for the judicial duties rests with the Inspectors, and for the administrative duties with the Department. These bye-laws are subject to the approval of the Privy Council. There is a power to hold inquiries. The Department, acting through the Chief Inspector, has for this purpose all the powers of a Court of Justice. The distinction between "judicial" and other bye-laws appears to be somewhat arbitrary. The term appears to mean a bye-law, the violation of which constitutes a criminal offence. An Order in Council made under Section 3 specifies the duties which are regarded as judicial. The distinction does not appear to be based on any definite principle, and in the revision of the Fishery Laws, which seems to be required, some clearer definition of the powers and duties of the Inspectors would be desirable.

1. SEA FISHERIES.

Endowment
Fund.

151. Section 16 (1) (d) allotted an annual sum of £10,000 out of the Endowment Fund of the Department for the purposes of Sea Fisheries. By (g) of the same sub-section Sea Fisheries were included in the objects to which the surplus of the Endowment Fund might be applied.

152. Before the establishment of the Department it was the duty of the inspectors to administer certain funds for the purpose of fishery loans. This system has, according to Mr. Green, been going on for a hundred years, "with the greatest success." The loss has been very small, and the benefit to the fishermen very great. During the seventeen years preceding the establishment of the Congested Districts Board in 1891, the amount of loans issued by the Inspector of Fisheries from the Irish Reproductive Loan Fund was £104,297. The loss by bad debts was £1 per cent., "and a lot of these bad debts occurred from people dying or the boats being lost." There was also a Sea and Coast Fisheries Loan Fund, from which, during the same period, loans for £38,135 were issued—the bad debts were not fivepence per £100. The portion of the loan's fund which was administered by the inspectors since the establishment of the Congested Districts Board has, during the last fifteen years, furnished loans amounting to £36,762—the bad debts only came to £1 per cent. on that sum. At the date of the establishment of the Congested Districts Board in 1891 the inspectors had in hand from the two funds above-mentioned £93,000. Of this £73,000 was transferred to the Congested Districts Board to be administered in congested areas.

There remained, therefore, for the purpose of the development of fisheries elsewhere than in congested districts £20,000 from the above-mentioned funds, £10,000 under Section 16 (1) (d) of the Act of 1899, and any sums allotted under (g) of the same sub-section from the endowment fund of the Department.

Though the sphere of the operations of the inspectors as regards loans was much curtailed, and the available amount reduced after the establishment of the Congested Districts Board, loans still continued to be made to a considerable extent. The security is usually personal security. This system seems to work best where there is a mixed community of fishermen and farmers, "because it is generally possible in such a community to find persons possessed of sufficient property ready to assist their neighbours by giving security." The loans that are required, it must be remembered, are comparatively large, being usually for the purchase of a boat and fishing gear and erection of curing houses. Where fishermen live by themselves apart from the farming or commercial class there is more difficulty in their finding security. The difficulty is to some extent got over by taking the boat for which the loan is granted as security. Mr. Green told us that during the last five years the loans applied for in the non-congested districts were 714, and of these 653 were recommended.

153. Besides the administration of the funds for the purposes of loans, the Department has also to deal with the building of piers and harbours in the non-congested districts. It is hardly matter of surprise that there are numerous applications for assistance of this kind. County Clare is the only county on the west coast of Ireland which has no congested areas.

In 1902 the Vice-President and Mr. Green undertook a survey of the whole West Clare coast, and in conjunction with local authorities inspected places for sites of piers. The coast of Clare is rock-bound and "absolutely unsheltered from the Atlantic sea." The fishing is entirely carried on by canvas canoes, which are hauled up out of reach of the sea. To create any harbours where modern boats could be used would mean an expenditure of thousands of pounds in Clare. All that seems reasonably possible is to make certain minor improvements. There seems, in fact, to be no possible fishery, having regard to the character of the coast, which would justify the building of harbours on a large scale. Contributions were offered by the Department to local authorities, but under the law as it exists at present the County Council cannot contribute to any new work the total cost of which exceeds £450. This disability is noted by us below, and seems to be a great obstacle to the undertaking of useful work. The want of piers and harbours in Clare is commented on by the witnesses named in the margin. Demands are also made for instructors in net-making and fish-curing. The absence of railway facilities is also a great drawback to the development of the fishery industry in Clare.

Antrim, too, and Down ask for more assistance in the development of their fisheries.*

* *Asst. Sec. Turtie*, 8853; *McCannell*, 8835-8. *Down*, *Shannon-Crawford*, 9041-51; *McGrath*, 9762-7.

Fishery Loans in non-congested Districts.

2022.

2023.

2053.

Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1891, sect. 22 (4).

2059.

2064.

2064

2064

2066.

Piers and Harbours.

2076.

Loan, 16703.

20734.

Moscall, 5192.

Kelly, 1284.

O'Loghlin, 5464-75.

Reen, 5354.

Green, 3731.

The duties of the Department in reference to the construction of piers and harbours require the employment of an engineering staff. The Congested Districts Board were under the same necessity. An arrangement has been made between the Department and the Congested Districts Board by which the Department has taken over the engineering staff of the Congested Districts Board, and work the two businesses with one staff.

3732.

GRI, 17146

The Department, amongst other things, found that the harbours on the east coast of Ireland were in danger of silting up. The port of Arklow, on the coast of Wicklow, the most important fishing centre on the east coast of Ireland, having also an important local maritime trade, was in great danger of being closed. The fishing fleet was dammed up. The Department undertook the work, and accomplished the clearing of the port at heavy expense, including purchasing from Holland a steam sand pump dredger, by which the port has since been kept clear. By a contribution of £2,500 voted by the Agricultural Board and by other means the danger which threatened the port and the fishing and other industries of the port was averted. The great public service rendered by the Department to the port is acknowledged in a letter which was put in evidence from Messrs. Kynoch, who own a cordite factory at Arklow.

17144.

Appendix XXV,
table III.

Work such as was undertaken at Arklow, however necessary, is, it is needless to say, a heavy strain upon the Department's funds, and could not have been practicable had there not been an accumulation of savings from the annual sum of £10,000 unexpended in the earlier years of the Department's existence.

Similar grants, though not on the same scale, have been made from time to time by vote of the Agricultural Board out of the surplus of the endowment fund; they appear to amount to about £20,000.

Green, 3728.

Lanc, 18707-42.

It seems right that where, as at Arklow, there is so large an expenditure of public money in which a particular town or district is especially interested, a portion of the expense should be levied by local rates. There appears, however, as has been already stated, to be a legal difficulty in the way of a contribution from the rates. Under the law as it stands the local authority cannot join with the Department in any work of new construction in the nature of a harbour or pier which will cost more than £450. The difficulty apparently does not extend to works of repairs. Mr. Green mentions several cases where the local authority has combined with the Department to execute works considered to fall under the category of repairs, not of construction. When the time comes for considering further legislation on this subject the point as to the powers of the local authority to contribute to works of construction should not be lost sight of.

Relations with
Congested
Districts Board.
Rushall, 407.

Lanc, 14710.

Green, 3715.

154. The relations between the Department of Agriculture and the Congested Districts Board are somewhat complicated. The greater part of those portions of the West coast of Ireland where there is the greatest need and also the greatest scope for the assistance of the State, is comprised in the Congested Districts area. It does not fall within our province to discuss the extent and the results of the operations of the Congested Districts Board as regards instruction in fishing, assistance in the provision of boats and gear, arrangements for curing and marketing of fish, construction and maintenance of piers and harbours, and otherwise. Although for these purposes the congested districts bordering on the sea-coast and the islands which are included in the congested area, are dealt with exclusively by the Congested Districts Board, for other purposes the congested districts are within the jurisdiction of the Department. The Congested Districts Board, for instance, has no power to make bye-laws, and is itself bound to observe the bye-laws made by the Department operating in congested districts. It is often, too, very difficult in an estuary to say where the line is to be drawn between the congested and the non-congested area. Again, the co-existence of these two involves a certain amount of duplication of expense. The principal matter calling for observation in this connection is that each body has purchased and maintains a special steamer. The Congested Districts Board owns the "Granuaile," and the Department the "Helga." The main use of the "Helga" is to protect the fisheries and capture trawlers fishing illegally. The Congested Districts Board has no authority to exercise this jurisdiction, but the "Granuaile" is

sometimes lent to the Department for the purpose. It would seem that one vessel could discharge the duty of protection.

155. The inconvenience and expense of two distinct bodies carrying on operations for the same general object in the same area is manifest. It is an arrangement eminently calculated to produce friction. In fact, however, the evidence given before us is that the relations between the two Departments have been most satisfactory. Mr. Green is not only the Chief Inspector of the Fisheries Branch of the Department, but also as a member of the Congested Districts Board he has taken for many years a leading part in the organisation and working of the methods of the Board for the assistance of fisheries in the congested districts. It is in a large measure due to Mr. Green's double position that there has been most cordial co-operation between the two bodies.

Duplication of Authorities.

Line, 16704.

It would be premature, now that the constitution and future operations of the Congested Districts Board are under investigation by a Royal Commission, to make any definite suggestion as to the future constitution of the Fishery authority for Ireland. In our opinion, whatever may be the proper constitution of that authority, whether all administration in relation to sea fisheries is assigned to the Department of Agriculture or any other authority, it is of the greatest importance that such overlapping of jurisdiction as now exists should cease, and that the administration should be vested in a single Department of the Irish Government.

156. With regard to instruction in fishing, Mr. Green tells us that "the amount of instruction in fishing we can give in the non-congested parts of Ireland is insignificant compared with that which the Congested Districts Board has to do in the West." The east coast fishermen have all the knowledge required. "There are isolated cases where we considered instruction was necessary." The method adopted is to engage an expert fisherman from the east coast of Scotland, or some other place where fishing is carried on on a large scale, putting him on board as a member of the crew. "There is no other way in which you can teach a man how to shoot nets and work the boat except at sea."

Instruction in Fishing.
3747.

3748

Mr. Green points out that the best mode of assisting the fishing industry is by improving the means of communication, especially landing facilities, such as piers and slips. He emphasises the importance of small works. The Irish coast abounds in small creeks and harbours which often admit of much improvement in means of landing at comparatively small cost. These small works are specially useful in respect of the two most important fisheries—the autumn Mackerel and Herring fishery.

3751.

157. The oyster fisheries of Ireland were formerly of importance. They extended over a large portion of the West coast. But the extension of railways and the improvement of transit facilities caused the working out of these beds. The Department is endeavouring, by means of protection and enforcing of regulations, to prevent further waste, and in some cases is going as far as re-stocking the public beds. Mr. Green told us that in some cases the effect of the improvement in the conduct of oyster fisheries had been to raise the price from 3s. 6d. to 8s. per hundred. Mr. E. W. Holt, the Scientific Adviser of the Department, gave an account of certain investigations and experiments which had been conducted by the Department in Ireland, England, and France. These inquiries were directed, amongst other matters, to the question of artificial propagation and to the "respective values for Irish relaying purposes of the various qualities of such oysters on the market."

Oyster Fisheries.

3745

34993.

The Department has always had in view "the establishment of a system of oyster culture by the occupiers of small holdings abutting on the foreshore." Mr. Holt refers to certain legal difficulties as regards the granting of licences for this purpose, which apparently should be removed by legislation.

16921.

There appear to be large public beds of oysters on the East coast of Ireland. In 1868 oysters from these beds are said to have fetched nearly £20,000 on the pier at Arklow. In 1878 the oysters produced £13,000.

Line, 14808.

"The industry died away to nothing in the eighties." This appears to have been partially due to economic causes, especially to increase of supplies from England and France. In 1900 "it was alleged that the Wicklow and Wexford beds had completely recovered and the Department was asked to finance a scheme for their exploitation." A thorough survey was made, with the result that the alleged recovery of the beds "had, at the most, but a partial foundation in fact, and that the condition of the trade was prohibitive as regarded this class of oyster." Mr. Holt mentions this case as an instance of the importance, in dealing with inquiries of this kind, of having regard to economic as well as scientific conditions.

Mr. Holt dwells on the difficulty of adequately protecting these public beds from excessive fishing. Increasing the stock of oysters means increasing the number of fishermen, and, consequently, the local fishermen do not get much benefit from the improvement in the beds. Mr. Holt appears to suggest the need of some more effective means of restricting the number of fishermen resorting to the beds.

Salmon.

The Salmon fishery being partly conducted in tidal waters, in estuaries, and in an increasing degree by drift nets in the open sea, might be reckoned amongst the sea fisheries, but as the operations for the preservation and increase of the fish are mainly conducted in inland waters we treat the subject under the head of Inland Fisheries.

Mackerel and
Herring Brand.

The evidence which we received on the subject of a brand for Irish cured mackerel and herring showed that the subject was one of great difficulty, and that it had been receiving the careful consideration of the Inspectors of Fisheries.

Georgetown, 4859-727.
Green, 3643.
Lace, 14867-910.

2. INLAND FISHERIES.

Financial
Assistance from
Endowment
Fund.

158. Prior to the Act of 1899, there were no public funds available for the improvement or development of Inland Fisheries. No capital or other sum is set apart for this purpose, and these fisheries are, therefore, dependent for aid on such sums as may be applied by the Department from time to time with the concurrence of the Agricultural Board. The Board has voted for Inland Fisheries about £2,500 per annum, and the money has been spent on the creation of Salmon and Trout Hatcheries, in Salmon-marking experiments, in assistance to Boards of Conservators to protect their rivers, and on improving fish passes on the rivers.

Holt, 12034.

Owing to the co-operation of owners of Fisheries and sportsmen, the expense of the salmon-marking experiments is little beyond the cost of labels and tools for affixing them, and a small amount paid in reward when labels returned.

Salmon and
Trout Hatcheries.
Green, 3705.

159. The subsidy to Hatcheries is usually by way of a Royalty of so much on the Salmon Ova hatched out. The amount spent in hatcheries since the Department was constituted is £3,096.

12034.

Mr. Holt considers the fund provided by the Board for these purposes to be ample, and he states that the artificial propagation of salmon and trout is being constantly extended. He describes the scheme under which financial assistance is contributed by the Department, and gives tables showing the capital and annual expenditure in each year since 1901, and the output of fry from salmon hatcheries on inland fisheries from 1890 to 1900, and from 1901 to 1906, from which it appears that the number of fry turned out had risen from 2,415,400 in 1900-1 to 6,583,750 in 1905-6, the total capital expenditure for the 6 years being £1,230, and the annual expenditure amounting in all to £1,816 9s. He claims that the care exercised in the proper treatment and turning out of the young fry has been so greatly improved that the mere increase in figures does not at all represent the probable increase in result.

15004.

12628-42.

The hatchery in the Blackwater at Lismore is one of the largest in Europe. Mr. Holt justifies the expenditure on that river, in which the right of fishing is almost altogether private property, on the ground that the fry that go into a river and go down as smolts do not come back to that river alone; that the effects of the hatchery are so widely diffused that it does not matter where it is placed, and the situation at Lismore is exceptionally favourable. It has great natural and artificial advantages for hatchery purposes; it is quite con-

15190.

veniently situated for the distribution of the fry, and is under the most excellent management, and runs no risk of neglect. There are excellent facilities also at Galway, but the owner of the fishery does not approve of hatcheries, so nothing has been done there.

The Agricultural Board has also provided funds for the experimental conduct of a trout farm on the German system, under which trout are grown in confinement for the table, but the work has not yet been initiated. The German and Dutch systems of carp-farming have been carefully examined, but found unsuitable to this country.

160. The justification for the expenditure of money on inland fisheries is that in Ireland the public have a right to fish in tidal rivers (except in the case of the Blackwater and a few other "several fisheries") which is largely exercised. The total value of the Irish salmon fisheries is about £300,000, of which about £60,000 represents the amount which goes to private proprietors, the difference, about £240,000, representing the public interest.* This is not the case in Scotland, in which there are no public rights of salmon fishing, and although such rights exist in England they are exercised to a much smaller degree than in Ireland.

There is no doubt, in the Inspector's opinion, that the breeding of fish for inland waters produces an effect, and that the hatcheries benefit the men fishing under the public rights as against the proprietary fishing in the proportion of three to one.

Mr. Green estimates the value of the Eel Fisheries at about £36,000 per annum. Mr. Ellis, of the Bann Eel Fisheries, considers this estimate is considerably under the actual figures—the value of the eels taken on the Bann Fishery, with which he is connected, being £10,000, while he believes an equal amount is taken higher up the river.

The law on this subject is obscure and may require revision. No definite suggestion was made to us as to any steps necessary to be taken for the development of this Fishery.

161. Various constitutional changes were urged by the representatives of the private Fishery interests and by the Millowners' Association. The Fishery owners desire that the Inspectors should be independent of the Department—in other words, that there should be a return to the position prior to the Department, but that they should be given additional powers and funds to be devoted mainly towards protection. The Millowners wish for no change beyond a right of appeal from the Inspectors and representation of their interests on the Agricultural Board.

As regards the suggestion made in the resolutions of several public bodies that the Fishery Branch should be separated from the Department and a separate Board of Fisheries created on the model of the Scotch Board, Mr. Green points out that there is a good deal of confusion of thought on the subject. The Scotch Fishery Board is appointed *altogether by the Crown*, and he thinks that the Department, with a large elective element on its Boards, is more in consonance with Irish ideas. In Ireland there is an important public salmon fishery element which does not apply in Scotland. There the salmon fisheries are all proprietary, and the bye-laws are made by the proprietors under the sanction of the Secretary for Scotland. A Board elected by persons interested in the fisheries might become a source of great difficulty, because some of these gentlemen would undoubtedly be interested in the questions which it would be the duty of the inspectors to investigate, and they can do their work more disinterestedly than they could under a Fishery Board.

In England the fisheries are connected with the Board of Agriculture. This has been done quite recently, and the American fisheries, which for about 30 years formed a separate Board, have been comprised under the Government Department of Commerce and Labour within the last two years.

Representation of County Councils on Boards of Conservators was claimed by some witnesses. The fishery proprietors who were examined, and

* It is not clear whether Mr. Green included in his estimate of the value of the Irish Salmon Fisheries the fish taken in drift nets in the open sea, a practice of recent origin, but which is largely on the increase. If he did not, his estimate of the value of the public, as compared with the proprietary, rights should be largely increased.

15084.	
Holt, 18648-4	
Holt, 15096	
Green, 8684-935.	
Value of Inland Fisheries.	
Loss, 14515-24	
3700	
Green, 3693.	
3693.	
Eel Fisheries	
3796-3.	
7685.	
3767.	
Administrative arrangements.	
Hallett, 6210.	
McDonnell, 7933.	
Power, 6797.	
Webb, 3995-12.	
3770.	
3775.	

14828-23.

Mr. Lane, Fishery Inspector, were opposed to such representation unless on the principle of contribution. Section 37 of the Local Government Act enables Rural District Councils, on the request of a Board of Conservators of a fishing district, to contribute towards the expenses of the Board and give them representation on the Board in the event of such contribution, but this power has not been exercised. The present Boards of Conservators are composed of a number elected by the licence-holders and a number of *ex officio*, mostly Magistrates, owning land on the banks of the rivers. He says, however, that it would be important by some means to induce a public interest in the salmon rivers, and sees no reason why there should not be some public representation on the Boards of Conservators. It would be useful if County Councils had power to appoint a limited number of representatives on condition of making adequate contribution.

Having regard, however, to the magnitude of the public interests involved, we think there is much to be said for the view that representation should be given to the public through the County Councils, irrespective of contribution, particularly if the Boards of Conservators are to share in public funds for purposes of protection to the extent they claim. At the same time, County Councils should be given power to contribute if they so desire.

Protection.

16073-5,
Hallet, 6237.
Buckford, 13610.
McDermott, 7832-42.
Elli, 7023-5.

Webb, 9490-16.
Fraser, 9737-565.

Fraser, 9737.

Appendix XXV.

162. The Inspectors consider the amount of money available for protection insufficient. The representatives of the Fishery interests also claim further aid to protection, not only of a pecuniary nature, but by more stringent enforcement of the laws prohibiting poisonous discharges into rivers, and requiring millowners to erect gratings to prevent small fish getting into turbines and water-wheels. The representatives of the millowners' interests strenuously denied that injury to fish was being caused either by the discharge of deleterious matter or by the turbines or mill-wheels, and that there was any laxity in the enforcement of the fishery laws as regards gratings. On the other hand, they claimed that there should be a right of appeal against the Inspectors' decisions, and that the millowners' interests should be represented on the Agricultural Board as a protection against the drastic and extensive powers vested in the Department, which "are capable of being used in such a manner as to seriously embarrass, and, in many cases, perhaps altogether hinder the operations of the milling industry."

With reference to the claims of the fishery proprietors that further grants should be made to Boards of Conservators in aid of Inland Fisheries, it appears from the return given in the Appendix that in addition to the sum of £3,096 10s. voted by the Agricultural Board for hatcheries, sums amounting to £2,483 19s. 6d. had been granted to Boards of Conservators in aid of protection, £1,421 5s. for scientific investigation, £753 19s. 10d. for engineering, and £121 5s. 7d. for miscellaneous expenses, making a total of £7,877 0s. 4d. to 31st March, 1906.

We think that a strong case has been made out for further aid to protection for Inland Fisheries. Such protection while of advantage to the proprietors of fisheries would benefit in a much greater degree those who fish in virtue of the public right.

3. SCIENTIFIC WORK.

Investigations

14982

3651.

163. Much importance attaches to the Scientific work of the Fisheries Branch of the Department. Mr. Holt, who is the Scientific adviser to the Department, has been engaged upon this class of work in Ireland since 1890. He has the aid of two assistant naturalists, and a third naturalist is in charge of the Department's oyster investigations. Mr. Holt has no clerical staff, but receives special assistance from one of the members of the Department's general staff. Various investigations set on foot by the Royal Dublin Society, aided by a grant from Imperial funds, took place between 1890 and 1892, which Mr. Green conducted, with the assistance of Mr. Lane, Mr. Holt, and Professor Haddon, and the results of these inquiries were utilised by the Congested Districts Board.

In 1898 the Royal Dublin Society, with the assistance of another grant, established a Marine Laboratory under Mr. Holt's direction. The investigations were mainly concerned with the Mackerel fishery. In 1900 the

laboratory was taken over by the Department, and the work of scientific investigation was greatly aided by the possession of the new cruiser, the "Helga." The "Helga" is primarily used for protection, and has to be constantly changing her station in order to carry out her duties efficiently. These conditions suit well with the simultaneous pursuit of scientific investigation, and by an efficient system of intelligence and communication she can be at once diverted from scientific to protective duties when occasion arises. By these means scientific investigations at sea can be carried on nearly continuously, with far less expense than if expeditions had to be made for the purpose.

A quarterly survey is made of the trawling grounds off the East coast, and a hydrographical and biological survey of the greater part of the Irish coast line. The presence or absence of fish on particular grounds can be ascertained. The movements of mackerel can be, to a certain extent, tabulated. Mr. Holt produced before us some charts indicating the result of investigations of this kind—indicating, amongst other things, that the wide migrations of mackerel are probably non-existent. The mackerel does not appear to be much of a wanderer. The investigations of the Department were at first independent, but are now conducted in co-operation with the International Council for Fisheries Investigations. This arrangement leads to an interchange of valuable information, especially with Denmark. Attention has been specially paid to Deep-sea fishing. The "Helga" explores on all possible opportunities the Deep-sea grounds on the West and South-west coasts.

"At present there is a valuable commercial fishery off the south-west of Ireland at about one hundred fathoms, a depth which would have been considered prohibitive of trawling a few years ago, but there is no reason to suppose that this fishery is inexhaustible. It is of interest to Ireland, not only because the few steam trawlers now owned in Ireland take part in it, but also because it seems to distract the attention of steam trawlers owned out of Ireland, from the littoral grounds, where they formerly occasioned a good deal of inconvenience to drift-net and long-line fisheries. The *Helga*, therefore, seeks to find trawling grounds in extension of those which the commercial trawlers are at present equipped to exploit, and has met with considerable success, though, naturally, not in the capture of fishes at present familiar in the menu. There are, in fact, large areas at soundings of about 200 to 300 fathoms richly stocked with fish of excellent table qualities, which (though they have as yet no vernacular names, and except in the *Helga's* records are hardly known outside museums), will, inevitably, come to be recognized as of commercial value. At present trawlers may go as far as Morocco to secure a catch of which a part is as unfamiliar in the home market as the deep-sea fishes referred to above, while it appears that with a few hundred extra fathoms of trawl-warp they could lead up with good fish of a sort at six or seven hours' steam from the south-west coast of Ireland, though, as I have said, these fish would not be such as are at present familiar on the fishmonger's stall."

164. Mr. Holt also referred to the scheme approved of by the Fisheries Commissioners, which contemplates the complete control of a salmon river for ten years, and the detailed observation of the habits and movements of the fish throughout the river system, and as far seawards as it may be possible to trace them. He explained that the scheme had not been undertaken

Scheme for complete control of Salmon River.

"because the Agricultural Board, though prepared to act generously in the matter, have not felt justified in contributing the whole cost of an investigation which would give results of as much value to England and Scotland as to Ireland. * * * The capital and annual expenditure involved is large, and the Board, while prepared to furnish more than half the cost, considered that the balance was properly payable by the Treasury who, so far, have not consented to contribute. The consequent lack of scientific investigation is regrettable because salmon passing a great part of their life in fresh water, and in the narrow waters of the sea, are obviously more amenable to human control than purely marine fishes, while practically nothing is known about them except their breeding, with the result that administrative measures designed for the improvement of the salmon fisheries must in great part proceed upon no assured basis of knowledge."

165. The Inspectors and Mr. Holt are agreed that although the financial aid given by the Department with the concurrence of the Agricultural Board for the promotion of Hatcheries has been ample, it would be easy to extend and perfect the scheme of research if more funds were available, and that it would be much better if, instead of varying grants out of the surplus, a certain annual sum were earmarked, as in the case of Sea Fisheries.

Mr. Holt also thinks that the assistant naturalists, who are an essential part of the scientific staff, should be on the establishment, and paid out of the annual vote instead of being dependent for their salaries on the Endowment Fund, the demands on which are continually increasing. He also considers additional clerical assistance necessary. This question is dealt with in the portion of our Report relating to Finance.

Grants for Research.

Paragraphs 223 and 242.

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION.

Position as to
Technical
Instruction in
1889.

166. For several years before the establishment of the Department public attention had been directed to the deficiencies of the country in facilities of education in all departments. The labours of the Recces Committee had brought out very fully the advantage which might be expected to accrue from more effective work of Technical Education. Intermediate Education had been dealt with in the Report of the Intermediate Education (Ireland) Commission appointed in 1898;* and one of the most important aspects of Elementary Education had been discussed very fully by the Commission on Manual and Practical Instruction in Primary Schools under the Board of National Education in Ireland appointed in 1897.† The educational work which the Act transferred to the Department was that which had been carried on previously under the Department of Science and Art; in addition to the management of the Central Institutions this included, in the year 1900-01, the administration of grants to about 100 schools, of which about 60 were classes in Secondary Schools, the other 40 being Evening Schools and Schools of Art. This work, however, was essentially sporadic, and had only the most slender relation to that done under the National Board and Board of Intermediate Education. The grant paid in respect of the local classes was upwards of £5,000, together with a special grant of about £2,500 in aid of Technical Instruction as defined by the Technical Instruction Act, 1889—the grant frequently referred to in Ireland as the "equivalent grant." At this time the teaching was very largely unaccompanied by either experimental work on the part of the students or definite demonstrations of its application in connection with specific industries. Indeed, there were only about half a dozen school laboratories in Ireland, and very few central schools had made even a beginning in providing instruction bearing directly upon trades.

Paragraph 22C.

RELATIONS OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION TO ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION.

Educational field
of the Depart-
ment.

167. In the region of Technical Education the main business of the Department is with those who have left the Elementary Schools of the National Board or the Intermediate Schools under the Board of Intermediate Education, and who are either already engaged in some employment or are obtaining advanced education in one of the institutions managed by the Department. On its establishment the Department had to direct attention to two problems. It was necessary at once to do the best possible in the circumstances for those who were still of such age as to be within the province of teaching institutions and who were thus possible students either in day or in evening classes. At the same time attention had to be directed to the various elements of educational machinery which required to be established or, if already existing, to be improved, in order to secure in the end combination which would deal in the most effective manner possible with the coming generation of pupils. Schools and classes definitely technical were in the province of this Department exclusively. These had practically to be created, the selection and training of teachers for the schools of the future being carried on concurrently with the development of the organised institutions in which they were to work. So far as concerned Secondary Schools, the Department had a certain *locus standi* in the administration of Science and Art grants; in these schools, as we note below, with the co-operation of the Intermediate Education Board the Department have already succeeded in establishing the laboratories necessary for sound education in Science and Art, and in training teachers in the matter and methods of instruction in Science and Art and for Manual Training as required for pupils in Intermediate Schools.

Relations to
Elementary
Education.

168. The great majority, however, of those on whom falls the brunt of industrial work have to rely upon the Elementary School for all the Preliminary Education they are to have, and the development of a practical aim in the training there given becomes of the greatest importance for a good Elementary Education. A bias in a practical direction does much to enable a boy to take his place in

* Parliamentary Paper [C. 9511].

† Parliamentary Paper [C. 8923].

active industrial work. Not only so, however, but such an education during the years of attendance at a Primary School is a necessary preliminary to any specialised instruction which a boy may receive later as bearing upon the work of the trade, industry, or employment upon which he has embarked. The Act constituting the Department does not deal with this part of the general question of Technical Education. The matter, however, is of so great importance that we venture to quote certain passages bearing upon it in the Report of the Commissioners on Manual and Practical Instruction in Primary Schools under the Board of National Education, published in 1898.

"It is thought that a good system of technical education would contribute largely towards the development of arts and industries in Ireland, and in this opinion we entirely concur. But the present system of primary education is so one-sided in its character that it leaves the pupils quite unprepared for Technical Education. The clever boys trained in the National Schools, if they are disposed to seek for a higher education, may pass with advantage into Intermediate Schools of the kind now general in Ireland, but they are not fit to enter a Technical School, even if they had such a school at their doors. Now, it seems to us that the changes we recommend would go far to remedy this defect. The system of National Education, modified as we propose, would give an all-round training to the faculties of the children, and would thus lay a solid foundation for any system of higher education—literary, scientific, or technical—which might afterwards be found suitable to their talents and circumstances." Part I., par. 3, p. 6

For details as to the recommendations of the Commissioners we must refer to their Report; but we may point out that, so far as the older pupils in Elementary Schools were concerned, these recommendations included that the practice of Woodwork, treated educationally, should be introduced in the higher classes of schools for boys, with the object, not of making the boys carpenters, but training them in habits of accurate observation, careful measurement, and exact workmanship, and that Drawing should be made compulsory in all National Schools. They recommended that a simple course of Elementary Science should form part of the ordinary education in National Schools, and that, while they did not think that practical farming was a subject that properly belonged to elementary education, the course of Elementary Science to be taught in rural schools should be so framed as to illustrate the more simple scientific principles that underlie the art and industry of agriculture; they also recommended the maintenance and extension of school gardens as a means by which these scientific principles might be illustrated and made interesting to the pupils; and that in schools for girls, Needlework, Cookery, Laundry Work, and Domestic Science should play the part that these other subjects took in the curriculum for boys.

Referring to these and others of their recommendations the Commissioners said:—

"We think it important that children should be taught, not merely to take in knowledge of books, but to observe with intelligence the material world around them; that they should be trained in habits of correct reasoning on the facts observed, and that they should, even at school, acquire some skill in the use of hand and eye to execute the conceptions of the brain. Such a training we regard as valuable to all, but especially valuable to those whose lives are to be mainly devoted to industrial arts and occupations. The great bulk of the pupils attending Primary Schools under the National Board will have to earn their bread by the work of their hands; it is, therefore, important that they should be trained from the beginning to use their hands with dexterity and intelligence." Part I., par. 1, p. 6

They expressed the opinion that the changes recommended ought to be introduced not all at once but gradually and tentatively.

It has not been our business to enquire to what extent changes of the character recommended have been introduced in the education given in Elementary Schools in Ireland. We note that in the programmes of instruction for National Schools issued by the Commissioners of National Education, much attention is devoted to this aspect of elementary education, but from recent reports on Primary Schools in Ireland, and from evidence given to us, we gather that it has not been found possible as yet to make a general improvement in this direction sufficiently effective to secure for the pupils now passing through Elementary Schools all that is desired. We wish, therefore, to state emphatically our opinion that for a very large proportion of the population of Ireland it is of the utmost importance that the education afforded in Primary Schools should be fully impressed with a practical aim in the way indicated; the pupils who have been trained in such schools should find in their education there a fair foundation for any training in trade or manufacture, or for any technical education that may be possible for them later, and we think that all possible means should be taken to secure the

further training of National School teachers so that they may be fully qualified to give instruction with the aim and with the spirit set before them in the Report of the Commissioners on Manual and Practical Instruction, and in the Notes for Teachers issued by the National Board. The National Board dealt with this matter on a large scale from 1900 to 1905, and are still carrying on a certain amount of supplementary instruction of this kind. Something too, has been done by classes under Local Technical Committees; but we think that in whatever way it is to be attained, the improvement in the training afforded by the Primary School, is so vital a factor in the question of technical education in Ireland that arrangements should be made at an early date to deal effectively with the problem and to meet the cost required to supplement the Parliamentary Grants available under the Department's scheme for such a purpose.

Secondary Schools

2111.

169. In Secondary Schools the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction had from the outset a direct means of influencing the trend of the Education provided. The Department of Science and Art, whose educational functions in Ireland were transferred to the new Department, gave grants in respect of instruction in Science, Drawing, and Manual Training in these schools; and it fell to the Department, as Mr. Fletcher, Assistant Secretary of the Department in respect of Technical Instruction, says "to revise the Regulations in much the same way as was done by the South Kensington Branch of the Board of Education in England, and by the Scotch Education Department in Scotland, but, of course, to amend them in accordance with our particular needs in Ireland as far as the special conditions prevailing here require. The Department sought then to avoid the evil of early specialisation, and its chief care was to see that Science should not be an accretion to Secondary Education. They desired that the teaching they sought to introduce should bear a due relation to the other main branches of a general education, and that it should take its place as an organic part of the Secondary curriculum." The Secondary Schools in Ireland are responsible to the Intermediate Education Board; and that Board was fully alive to the fact that the system of test by written examinations, to which, in practice, they were restricted, was not suitable for the development of the aspect of training for which the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction was empowered to give grants. The Department and the Intermediate Education Board arranged for administrative co-operation on lines which prove to have been well calculated to secure the full advantage of this section of the instruction given in the Secondary Schools.

Rev. T. Finlay, 3524.

Messrs. Dale and Stephens' Report.

170. In 1905 Messrs. F. H. Dale and T. A. Stephens, Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, Board of Education, presented to His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant a report* on the system of Intermediate and Technical Education in Ireland, based upon an inquiry which they had conducted at his request. Dealing with the co-ordination of the work of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction with that of the Intermediate Education Board, Messrs. Dale and Stephens say:—

83. Within the years 1892-93, though the number of boys who were examined in the three higher grades of the Intermediate Examinations increased from 2,865 to 4,385, the number of scholars offering recognised branches of science decreased from 2,988 to 705; and the instruction even of these candidates had practically no genuine educational value owing to the absence of any proper equipment. There were only half-a-dozen Intermediate Schools in Ireland provided with laboratories.

83. It was obvious that the continuance of these defects would prevent any co-ordination of Intermediate and Technical Education, and steps were accordingly taken by co-operation between the two Departments concerned to apply an effective remedy; and it is necessary, in order to render the present position intelligible, to give a brief summary of the arrangements made to secure this end.

84. Since 1901 the Department has remodelled the syllabuses of instruction for Intermediate Schools in Science and Art subjects, and the conditions on which grants were to be awarded for these subjects. In the first place, a systematic course of instruction in Science and Art to cover four years was devised. The first two years were devoted to a Preliminary Course obligatory for all pupils and schools, and consisted, so far as the Science was concerned, of instruction in Elementary Physics and Chemistry, designed primarily to familiarise the pupil with the methods and principles common to all branches of scientific inquiry; while in the last two years, the student was to specialise in some definite branch of Science—e.g. Chemistry, Mechanical Science, Botany, etc. The detailed syllabus issued by the Department for the guidance of teachers was at

* Parliamentary Paper [Cd. 2546].

first limited to the Preliminary Course; but in 1903, when the system had been in operation for two years, syllabuses were issued for the advanced instruction upon which the students were now qualified to enter.

Similar action has been taken by the Department with regard to the cognate subjects of Manual Instruction and Domestic Economy. A graduated course for four years has been drawn up for each of these subjects, although they are in so far subordinate that a school can only take them in the Preliminary Course for the first two years as a supplement to Experimental Science and Drawing.

85. Again, definite requirements are now made as to the amount of time which is to be allotted in the school time-table to subjects of Science and Art.

86. The most important change, however, introduced by the Department has been the change in the methods of instruction and in the conditions on which grants are awarded for the subjects in question. Under Rule 1 of Section II. of the Department's Regulations, "Experimental Science shall mean such a system of instruction in Physical and Natural Science, as will involve the greater part of the work being done by the pupils themselves in an approved laboratory." In order to secure the fulfilment of this condition, the Department has assisted managers in planning the necessary laboratories, and has made grants of money in aid of their equipment.

While by means of these regulations the Department has insisted on Science being taught systematically in schools under favourable conditions, it has made the assessment of the work done depend, as a natural corollary, not upon written examination, but primarily upon the satisfactory attendance and progress of the pupil as tested by inspection.

87. These conditions, however, owing to the smallness of the grant which the Department could offer, could hardly have been carried into effect without the co-operation of the Intermediate Education Board. That Board has adopted the regulations and syllabuses of the Department for the purpose of its own examinations and the distribution of its own grants.

In addition to the adoption of the Department's regulations, the Intermediate Education Board also accepts the tests applied by the Department's Inspectors for the purposes of the grants made by the Department.

88. By these measures a genuine co-ordination has been effected in the working of the two Departments concerned. A single set of rules and a single inspection serve the purpose of assessing the grants of both, and this avoidance of overlapping is in itself no small gain. Again, the greatest benefit has undoubtedly been derived from the unanimity with which both Departments have directed their influence to the re-establishment of Science and Art in the Intermediate Schools.

That these expensive improvements have been carried out, as our inquiries showed, without friction and in so short a time is in itself a sufficient testimony to the tact of the Department's officers and the public spirit of the managers of the Intermediate Schools.

89. The number of students offering Experimental Science and Drawing in the Intermediate examination of 1905 was no less than 5,950—viz., 4,576 boys and 1,374 girls; while the special grants made by the Department for the subject, which in 1902-3 amounted to £9,294 8s. 2d., rose in 1905-6 to £12,533 16s. 4d.*

90. It is hardly possible to over-estimate the importance of this reform in Irish Education. For the first time in Ireland genuine instruction in Science and Drawing has been rendered possible, and the old methods of purely theoretical work, based solely, or almost solely, on textbooks and examination papers—work which was not merely futile in itself, but absolutely prejudicial to any proper grasp of scientific method—have been superseded by a system under which every student is forced to familiarise himself with the procedure of investigation by actual experiment. It would be superfluous to dwell on the educational gain involved; in every school that we visited where Science was being taught the teachers were unanimous in their appreciation of the increased interest of the subject and the benefit to the scholars already won under the new conditions and syllabus. This verdict is the more satisfactory since the work is still in its initial stages. The novelty of the change and the lack of specially trained teachers have hitherto prevented, and must for some years prevent, the full fruit of the reforms from being properly seen.

91. Finally, the enlistment of the local interest of the Technical Education Committees in the Intermediate schools by the introduction of Science and Art subjects, which on general grounds is most desirable, has already resulted in an economy of expenditure and effort in various districts.

The evidence we received and our own observations amply support the testimony which these experts give as to the remarkable results already obtained in this section of educational work.

171. The preparation of a satisfactory programme in Science and Art for Secondary Schools presented comparatively little difficulty; the real difficulties were the provision of facilities for laboratory practice by the pupils and the supply of teachers qualified to carry out the programme in the spirit in which it was conceived.

Secondary School needs.

*The number of students offering Experimental Science, Drawing, and Domestic Economy at the Intermediate Examinations in 1906 was 9,910—viz., 7,050 boys and 2,860 girls; while grants made by the Department in respect of such instruction in 1906-7 amounted to £21,991.

M

Laboratories and Workshops.

172. Prior to 1900 six Secondary Schools possessed laboratories. The immediate preparation of properly equipped laboratories and manual workshops was among the most pressing necessities the Department had to meet. The Treasury sanctioned a grant in aid of the equipment of laboratories; the Technical Instruction Committees gave grants for the same purpose. These grants together amounted, as a rule, to about seven-ninths of the cost of equipment; the Managers provided the balance of two-ninths of the cost of equipment and the whole cost of building. Mr. Fletcher says:—

2344-6.

"In many cases there was a large amount. School managers have been very ready to improve their buildings and put up most excellent rooms for the teaching of Science and Drawing, and thus I am sure, has contributed, in a large measure, to the increased efficiency. . . . Science is now taught under favourable conditions. . . . Our effort was to make the laboratories simple and effective. Thus, although the first two years' Course involves the teaching of Elementary Physics and Elementary Chemistry, in all the small schools we have been quite ready to accept a composite laboratory in which both may be taught. We have only asked for one room for the teaching of these two branches. In fact, we distinctly discouraged undue expenditure on the laboratories. I would like to explain that another difficulty was necessarily encountered at this stage. We had had no Science teaching of a practical character in these schools, and, therefore, the nature of the laboratories, the equipment of them, and the apparatus to be got was not understood, and a very severe burden was thrown on our Inspectors. In the great majority of cases the Inspectors drew up plans, and these were sent for concurrence to the schools concerned. In other cases the schools either drew up the plans themselves or got architects or specialists to draw them up, and sent them to us for revision, but in almost every case it meant a visit or several visits, the Inspector giving such aid to the schools as was possible."

Two hundred and sixty-five Secondary Schools are now supplied with laboratories, &c., so equipped as to comply with the rules of the Department; indeed the necessities of accommodation for this section of the work appear to have been practically met so far as existing necessities require.

Science Teachers.

173. The supply of teachers presented special difficulties. For the future there was the prospect that those trained in the Royal College of Science and in the Universities would possess not merely an adequate knowledge of the subjects of instruction but sufficient familiarity with practical details of laboratory work and with methods of instruction suitable for schools, to justify their direct appointment to responsible work in the Science sections of Secondary Schools. In 1900 very few indeed of the teachers in office or available had the qualifications and experience required. There were, however, many teachers who had successful experience in the work of their profession in Mathematics and in other subjects, and who were prepared to devote a considerable amount of time to the study of Science and of the methods of Science teaching in order to qualify themselves for effective work as teachers of Science. With a view to the special training of such teachers, the Department initiated a large scheme of Summer Courses. Each Course lasts for twenty-four working days in July, and a large number of the best teachers available are engaged, each as instructor in his own special subject or department. Those selected to attend these Courses as students are themselves teachers in Secondary Schools, and each who passes successfully the examinations at the end of a Summer Course is provisionally recognised for one year, and after satisfactory attendance at a second year's Course for a second year, and so on; such provisional recognition is made permanent after five Summer Courses. One hundred and seven certificates have been awarded to teachers who have been successful in the work of five Summer Courses up to 1906. The results of this system have been satisfactory. The concentration and assiduity of those under training, the progress they make in the intervening sessions of study and practice in their respective schools, the stimulus of the annual course of instruction under men of distinction in their profession, and the recurring periods of personal contact with fellow-students of like aims and experience with themselves, have enabled the teachers, who have given up their time to this object, to secure no mean measure of qualification.

Manual Instructors.

174. A supply of Manual Instructors for work in Secondary Schools and in special classes in towns and in rural areas had to be provided in a different way. The Department selected successive batches of about twenty skilled artisans of good character and education, and arranged for each batch a course of instruction in methods of teaching and in the work which had been found to be most suitable for the manual training of boys and young men. Each course lasted five months, during which the students

in training received 30s. a week subsistence allowance in lieu of wages. The men who passed successfully through these courses found ready employment as instructors, and their teaching has given much satisfaction throughout the country. For the further training of Manual Instructors, Summer Courses have been arranged in such subjects as Modelling, Wood-carving, Building Construction.

175. The above observations as to the activity of the Department in the Section of Secondary Education with which they were concerned, applies with no less force in connection with the education of girls than it does to that of boys. There is now in Ireland a good supply of Secondary Schools equipped for adequate instruction in Domestic Arts, based upon a preliminary training in the elements of pertinent sections of Science and Art. The preparation of teachers for this department of Girls' Schools has received effective treatment, and the quality of the work done by those who have passed through the Training School for Teachers of Domestic Arts is good demonstration alike of the aptitude of the women students for this work, and of the fitness of the course of training which has been organised. The broadening of the education afforded to girls in Convent and other Secondary Schools is a marked feature of the progress in education of a secondary stage. It has been brought about by the policy, which the Department adopted deliberately, of giving assistance towards the equipment of laboratories and practical class-rooms, to the authorities of Girls' Private Schools. Boys' Private Schools also received assistance, but almost all the Girls' Secondary Schools in Ireland are more or less private. Those schools which have received such assistance from public funds are doing valuable public work, and there is no other machinery by which this public work could be done.

Girls' Secondary
Schools,

176. The Irish Training School of Domestic Economy has been sending out annually a number of well-qualified teachers of the various Domestic Arts and those who complete the course there, find ready employment in good fields of work in Ireland. In view, however, of the great opportunity for work of a telling character which is afforded in the schools of all grades for girls, and in view of the large part which the Convent Schools take in that work, it is specially gratifying to learn that the teachers in these schools have shown much keenness in adding to their aptitude for the duties of teacher the qualifications in Science, Art, and Domestic Economy which were to be obtained in the Supplementary Courses established by the Department. Mr. Fletcher in his evidence on this point said :—

Convent Schools.

"In a great many places we held courses for Nuns. A large number of girls' schools are convent schools and taught by staffs of Nuns. In some cases these are enclosed Orders, and if we are to introduce science into such schools it becomes necessary to send teachers to the convents. We arrange for the Nuns to come from other convents of the same Order to a centre, and hold a course there. In that case we do not provide anything for accommodation. We pay the teacher. The question of teachers and their qualifications is dealt with just as in the case of the public schools. It was only by such means that we could have introduced science as a general scheme all over the country. The scheme is introduced into the convent schools quite as freely as in the others. . . . There has been no difficulty whatever in any class of the convent schools, and the teaching in some of the convent schools is as good as is to be found in Europe. . . . The attitude of the teachers towards this course was admirable, and enabled us to introduce, without exception, the teaching of experimental science into convent schools of a secondary type in Ireland."

2174-6.

In some of the convent schools there have long been good industrial classes; Cookery, Laundry Work, and Housewifery have always been prominent subjects in the courses of instruction there. The teaching of these subjects, however, has shared fully in the increase in effectiveness of all the work of the school that has followed upon the introduction of methodical science teaching. Thus the Bishop of Elphin, speaking of a large convent in his diocese, says :—

"Unquestionably a great impetus has been given to study of every kind since the Department was instituted. They have got their laboratory; and Domestic Economy in the most useful and practical form is taught. Their progress has been made which, I think, never would have been made but for the assistance of the Department."

2428.

177. Much advantage in the work of the Department in relation to Secondary Schools has accrued from their discussions with the Committee of Heads of Secondary Schools which they formed, in order that they might the more readily benefit in advance by the experience of those who

Committee of
Heads of
Secondary
Schools.
Fletcher, 2180-21.

are actively engaged in the work of the schools. This Committee consists of representatives of such associations as the Teachers' Guild, the Convent Schools Committee, the Catholic Head Masters' Association, the Christian Brothers, the Schoolmasters' Association, and the Association of Head Mistresses. It is called together once or twice a year when the representatives of the Department discuss with the Committee matters upon which the Department wishes to have the advantage of their experience, opinions, or advice, on subjects which the Committee desire to bring before the Department. In this and other ways the Department have taken special pains to keep in full touch with the schools. Speaking of the work of the Inspectors of the Department, Mr. Fletcher says:—

"I think I may say that the advice and criticism which the Inspectors have always been ready to offer have been universally welcomed, and that the Inspectors and heads of schools are on excellent relations. I venture to think that one of the most potent causes of what I regard as a satisfactory state of things has been the close touch of the Department with the Secondary Schools in the country. The views of the Secondary Schools are sought and obtained upon all important questions in our programme."

Speaking of the scheme for the teaching of Science in Secondary Schools, the Very Reverend Dr. Crehan, Head Master of Blackrock College, Dublin, says:—

"There is one thing which deserves special mention to show the foresight of those into whose hands the organisation of the scheme was committed. They knew they were imposing on the heads of schools obligations which they would find very difficult to carry out, so they determined to consult with a representative body of the heads of schools in order to do away with as many difficulties as possible. The officials of the Department call together annually the consultative committee, which is composed of the representatives of the different educational bodies who have charge of these schools, and discuss with them in friendly converse the merits and demerits of the programme. Much benefit has undoubtedly been derived from these meetings, and the free interchange of ideas has been of very great advantage, not only to the Department, but to the heads of schools, who learn to respect the different views they may severally have on many points connected with Science and its teaching."

Dual Administration of Secondary Schools.

178. Excellent as has been the effect of the well-considered conditions and arrangements accompanying the assistance which the Department has given to Science, Art and Manual Training in Secondary Schools, we cannot but concur in the regret expressed by Messrs. Dale and Stevens in their detailed report upon intermediate education in Ireland that under existing conditions this section of the work of the schools cannot be brought into organic connection with their general curriculum. However cordially the Department and the Intermediate Board may co-operate, the mere fact of dual administration, and the essential difference of basis in their financial assistance as depending, in the one case, on inspection and, in the other, on written examination, are sufficient to preclude the intermediate schools of Ireland from deriving full benefit from the support they receive from National Funds. We are of opinion that the earliest opportunity should be taken to concentrate in the hands of one central authority the administration of all funds available for the assistance of Secondary Schools, so that the curriculum and methods of the schools may be dealt with by a single central authority whose business it would be to consider these in relation to all the educational circumstances of the locality. Such an arrangement need not lose for the schools the advantage of personal contact with Inspectors whose daily experience kept them in touch with the special requirements of the area in the matter of technical education and with the steps necessary to satisfy these.

FURTHER EDUCATION.

Continuation Classes.

179. It is obvious that further education—education in continuation of that obtained in a Day School, Primary or Secondary, is of the utmost importance in technical education. It has, as a rule, to be carried on concurrently with employment by which a youth is earning his living or doing something towards that end. It consists essentially of two elements—that required to extend the general education obtained at School, and that required to prepare for and to supplement the training effected by daily work in the office, workshop, or factory. This latter element is the more

obviously and distinctively technical, and the precise character which it assumes varies very greatly according to the nature of the employment to which it is related. It may turn upon the study of Composition, Calculations, Languages, Design, Mechanics, Experimental Science—subjects which fall to be dealt with in the ordinary class-rooms and laboratories of a school, or it may require a more or less specialised workshop in which those under instruction may carry out actual trade operations of sufficient extent to enable them to appreciate the application of the principles that underlie the practice of their trade. In still other cases an employment may demand of those who practice it, little more than ordinary intelligence and considerable manipulative dexterity; for those who are to make their living in such an occupation it is of the first importance that their general education should have had a practical bias, and should have included an adequate hand-and-eye training. Where the Primary School course has been definite in these respects, it may be to some extent supplemented by the work of Continuation Classes; but expertness of hand and eye, where not hereditary, can be promoted far more effectively in the earlier years of training than in the later. What measure of progress in this matter is possible for those who have reached the age for apprenticeship, must be obtained in the course of daily practice in the trade workshop rather than in school. To the school, however, those engaged in manipulative industries who aim at qualifying themselves for the more responsible positions in these, must resort for the continuation of their general education and for an opportunity of obtaining the necessary knowledge of materials, of machinery and of the principles of Science upon which their industrial operations depend.

180. For further education in these various directions aid from national funds is available in two ways:—

- (a) From the Department's Endowment Fund, and
- (b) From grants voted by Parliament.

Speaking generally, we find that the schemes of technical instruction in operation in the various areas have been so drawn as to devote the money available from the former of these resources—the Department's Endowment Fund, along with the sums raised by local rates and by fees of students, to meet initial and standing charges in respect of technical instruction, and to secure that wherever there appears to be an adequate field for a technical school, such a school should be established. The adequate development of these schools and of classes formed in centres where no permanent technical school is possible, depends in very many places upon the possibility of obtaining the necessary supplementary assistance from the second of the resources named—annual Parliamentary grants. These grants are, first, the grant formerly administered by the Department of Science and Art, and, second, the grants for Evening Schools administered by the National Board. The former of these is now administered by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, and for several years its administration was based upon the old regulations of the Board of Education which, under changed educational conditions, had become unsuitable. The sections of teaching in Science and Art, however, which, in the earlier years of their work the Department found it most necessary to develop, could be promoted most readily under the conditions regulating the utilisation of the Endowment Fund. A revised scheme for the administration and distribution of these Parliamentary Grants has recently been promulgated. The scheme has not yet been in operation for a year, and its financial effect has not yet been satisfactorily gauged, indeed its nature can scarcely be said to be fully appreciated. We believe that it is drawn upon sufficiently liberal lines to afford adequate supplement to the other funds in all cases where there is a real need for courses of instruction definitely applicable to commerce, trades, constructive or manufacturing industries, art or domestic subjects, and where the necessary accommodation is available.

181. This Scheme, however, deals only with pupils who have previously "received such an education as would entitle them to be placed in the sixth class of a school under the National Board." Instruction in Evening

Funds available.

Dual Administration of Evening Schools.

Classes for pupils below this standard falls to be provided under the Rules and Regulations of the Commissioners of National Education, and the Parliamentary Grant in aid of this instruction is administered by the Commissioners. It is clear that a very large number of pupils leave the Elementary Schools without completing their elementary education; and for one reason or another the supply of classes for the continuation of this education is quite insufficient, even in the more populous centres, to bring the National School pupils up to the standard at which their technical education under the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction should begin. As a result of this state of matters, either the classes, by which alone many young people could prepare themselves to receive the technical instruction which they require, are not, as a matter of fact, provided, or, if provided, they are maintained by Local Authorities or Managers of Technical Schools partly, at least, out of funds which ought to be devoted to education higher than elementary. We have had evidence to the effect that Evening Schools, which aimed essentially at providing higher instruction of a technical character, found it necessary to carry on preparatory departments which are concerned only with that completion of elementary education which the students require before they can enter with advantage upon the course which it is the real business of the school to provide; and we have been informed that the school authorities find that they are unable to bring these lower classes into line with the conditions affecting grants of the National Board for Evening Classes, since these conditions do not lend themselves to the arrangement of the course of greatest educational advantage for the students they have to educate. We are not satisfied that the difficulties of securing these grants in aid of the lower stage classes required in Evening Schools might not be surmounted if School Managers and Head Masters took the matter up with energy; but we are of opinion that it is unfortunate that there should be two sets of conditions affecting Parliamentary grants in aid of a section of Educational work which is continuous, both as to matter and as to conditions of instruction, from the lowest stage to the highest.

Edinburgh, 18094.

Daley, 8613-39.

Farrell, 12482

Rill, 18006-8.

Rendley, 8980-5.

Forth, 2665-84.

Woodfin, 8224-28.

Lark, 8711-5.

Change necessary.

182. It is eminently desirable that every facility should be afforded for continuous treatment in Further Education as given in Evening Classes—that there should be no break either in the management or in the administration. Full advantage cannot be obtained from the lower Evening Classes unless they are included in the Scheme of provision for Further Education for which the local authority is responsible to the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction; it would therefore appear that the administration of the Parliamentary grant in aid of this grade of work should be in the hands of the Department. The inspection of classes which are essentially for the completion of Elementary Education would necessarily be carried on by the Officers who by their experience in the inspection of National Schools, and by being in constant touch with the teachers in charge of these Schools, are in the most favourable position at once to judge of the work done, and, by their influence with the Day School teachers, to help in encouraging boys and girls to enter Evening Classes when they leave the Day School. These Officers are the Inspectors of the National Board; but it should not be impossible to make an arrangement for their continuing their share in this work so as to minimise in this important borderline of educational provinces, the difficulties that are unavoidable where all educational administration is not under one Department.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES FOR TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION.

Authorities concerned.

183. While it rested with the Department to determine the general outline of organisation for technical instruction, and the conditions for the administration of grants from the annual Parliamentary Vote, the responsibility for the expenditure of the portion of the Department's endowment available for technical instruction was laid upon the Department and the Local Authorities jointly. These Authorities are the Councils of the County Boroughs, of the Counties and of the Urban Districts. The Act, how-

ever, gave to each Council power to appoint a Committee for the purpose of the Act, that is, a Committee to deal with questions of Agriculture and of Technical Instruction. It must be remembered that the Councils in Ireland were still in their first period of office when the Department was constituted, and that there had not been in Ireland any system of School Boards such as existed in England and in Scotland, nor indeed had there been any system of Committees dealing with educational matters at all. There was thus a marked want of informed public opinion as to educational possibilities, and an absence of experience among laymen in the management of educational institutions which made it necessary for the Department to spend much time on work essentially local in character. Further, in a large part of Ireland, agricultural interests so over-shadowed technical instruction that it was not unnatural that an effective local interest and capacity for local management in education should be matters of slow growth.

184. The part of the Endowment Fund allocated for the purposes of technical instruction elsewhere than in County Boroughs, and the local rates devoted to that purpose, can only be applied in accordance with the provisions of schemes or for other expenditure approved by the Department. At the outset the Department issued, as a general guide in the matter, a pamphlet of suggestions, followed by a memorandum on the powers of the Local Authorities and on the procedure to be followed in their work under this section of the Act. As a rule they met each Local Authority in conference for the discussion of the work which might profitably be undertaken. A separate scheme of technical instruction was prepared for each area, and these schemes have been revised annually. The procedure adopted has aimed at bringing the Local Authority to face the problem of technical education. Where a Local Authority had not previously formulated a scheme for technical instruction for its area the Department has submitted a draft, and the Local Authority have considered this draft in conference with one of the Department's Inspectors and have given such criticism, mainly based upon local circumstances and necessities, as suggested itself to them. Each scheme when adjusted and approved by the Department had to be worked under the observation and control of the Local Authority. Local Authorities in this way have generally acquired knowledge and experience of this section of their duties, and in practice they now require less detailed assistance and supervision from the Department than they formerly did.

Functions of the Department.

§ 29(4).

185. The final local arrangements for Classes have in many cases devolved upon local committees, each dealing with a parish or district, and we have had ample evidence of the importance of the interest of such committees as a factor in the success of classes or courses. The activity, and even the establishment, of such committees is as yet by no means universal, but in the five or six years of work under the Act much progress has clearly been made.

Local Committees

186. Describing the procedure in the initiation of the work and the relations of the Department with the local authorities, Mr. Fletcher says :—

Procedure and Relations of Department to Local Committees.

2235

"The record of this branch of technical instruction is one of continued success. In the first year of the Department's work a little delay was inevitable. The Department had practically no staff; committees had to be formed under local authorities; the rate to be struck, and schemes to be formulated. A reference to the annual reports of the Department will show that in successive years until now, a greater number of local authorities had been willing to rate themselves, and to administer schemes under the Department's control, until there is only one county at the present time which has not a scheme in operation. That is Lonsdale, but I believe it is proposing a scheme next year. This first year was, however, one of inquiry and discussion, and a large amount of preliminary work was done. Committees were formed, schemes of pioneer lectures framed and carried out, deputations of local authorities to visit technical schools in England and Scotland arranged by the Department and conducted by its officers. All this was a necessary preliminary to the drawing up of schemes. The Department would have been glad, had it been possible, to leave the formulation of schemes entirely to local authorities, and indeed many proposals and suggestions were received. These can, if it be thought desirable, be dug out from the archives of the Department. They were, in every case, fully discussed between the Inspector of the Department and the local authority, and an agreement was arrived at as to how much of them could be usefully incorporated in the local scheme. They were proposals quite natural under the circumstances, coming from committees without experience of technical work. For example, I have a case in mind, where the scheme of technical instruction from a committee really

involved the redistribution of the funds amongst various rural districts in proportion to their rate contribution. I need hardly say that it was a hopeless scheme, indeed, when I suggested that one might go a step farther and pay to each ratepayer the particular amount he had contributed to the scheme under the rate and have a little technical scheme of his own. It solved the question, and we went back to a scheme for the county at large; but in all cases these proposals from the committee were fully discussed between the Department's Inspector and the local authority, and in all cases, I think, the agreement was arrived at as to how much of the proposals could be incorporated in the local scheme. In those early days the meetings between the committees and myself were very frequent indeed; a number of proposals were made, and they were all anxiously considered, and in the end, after much discussion, we arrived at schemes of technical instruction very much on the lines of those at work to-day. I would desire to deal rather fully with the question of our relations to these local bodies. I can speak with, I believe, a large amount of first-hand knowledge on the subject. I have met, I believe, almost every local statutory technical committee in Ireland, and in many cases my visits have been repeated a number of times. Let me say at once that I have the very highest opinion of the usefulness of these bodies, and it is due to their interest and enthusiasm, combined with what I believe to have been wise direction on the part of the Department, that so much good work has been done. As I know these committees from long and frequent meetings, I am convinced, speaking generally, of their earnestness and keen desire to promote technical education in the areas dealt with by them. They have co-operated with us during the last five years in working out an intensely difficult problem. Education differs somewhat from other matters dealt with by Government departments. It cannot succeed without the interest and good-will of the community as a whole; it is useless to attempt to force it, and although in certain directions progress might have been more rapid by direct effort, it certainly could not have been so enduring. I am convinced that the only way to establish technical education on a sound and healthy basis is to develop it on the lines now adopted, viz., through committees of local authorities."

We have received much evidence as to the relations between the Local Authorities and the Department, and we are satisfied that the officers of the Department have shown in the discharge of their duty much ability and tact. The adjustment of schemes has involved the discussion of many subjects which may readily give rise to differences of opinion, and upon which on occasion these differences may readily become sharp. Every scheme involves decisions upon the nature of instruction required in the area; the methods of instruction to be adopted; the staff required; the salaries of the staff; the qualifications of the staff; arrangements for classes; allocation of funds available. In view of the number of Local Authorities to be dealt with, the difficulty of practically originating a network of new educational machinery to cover the whole country, and the scarcity of men qualified in every way for the offices created, we are of opinion that the number of cases of friction between the Department and Local Authorities has been surprisingly small. The cases which have attracted most attention have referred to the qualification of members of staff, and it appears to us that the Department has not in this matter over-stepped its duty as responsible for the greater part of the money involved.

See Subject-Index ;
County and Urban
District Committees.

County Boroughs.

187. It has been contended that, in the case of the County Boroughs at least, the Department has exceeded its powers under the Act in prescribing conditions as to the staff of Technical Institutions. By Section 16 (1) (c) (i) of the Act, however, that portion of the annual sum of £55,000 which is allotted as therein provided to County Boroughs is to be applied by the respective Councils of those Boroughs in aid of schemes approved by the Department for the purposes of technical instruction. The terms of the section appear to us to be amply sufficient to entitle the Department to withhold its assent to any scheme which either omits some provision on which it insists or includes one to which it objects. It has practically a veto on County Borough schemes. For instance, in our opinion, the Department would be within its rights in requiring that there should be a clause in the scheme making the approval of the Department a condition of the appointment of a Headmaster, or providing any other reasonable security that members of the staff are properly qualified. A dispute on a question of this kind led to serious difficulty in connection with the scheme for technical instruction in the City of Dublin, a difficulty which has considerably retarded progress there.

Walligan, 13391-
641.

Fletcher, 16647-82.

Evidence as to
Relations
generally.

188. The administration of the Act during the past six years has brought under the review of the Department a great number of schemes, of modifications of schemes, of proposals as to the organisation of educational institutions and of appointments in such institutions. We realise that local authorities may from time to time have difficulty in seeing eye to eye with the Department, and we have been much impressed by the fact that

although all the 66 local authorities dealing with technical instruction were invited to give evidence on the subject of our Reference, the number of cases in which friction has arisen is extremely limited; and even in these cases we have been satisfied that the action taken by the Department has been, on the whole, in the public interest.

189. We need not enter into details of methods of technical instruction. Suffice it to say that these vary with the conditions under which the work has to be carried on, and that many temporary expedients have been made use of to meet initial difficulties. Some of the arrangements adopted for temporary purposes have proved sufficiently effective to justify their being retained, with necessary modifications, as elements in the educational machinery even after the initial stages had passed. Variety of treatment has attended in a very special degree the steps taken towards the provision of technical instruction directly bearing upon specific industries. In this section of the Department's work, the nature of the industry—the amount of knowledge, as distinct from manipulative skill, required of the workers—the custom as to apprenticeship—the degree of efficiency reached by existing workers—the need for new departures in trade methods and many other factors vary so greatly that each case has practically to be considered by itself, and a method of providing the technical instruction likely to be effective has to be devised. Not all the methods adopted have been successful; but a great deal of excellent work has been done and many satisfactory lines of action have been demonstrated. Much ground has yet to be covered, but officers of the Department have now obtained in various parts of the country a volume of experience that enables them to give valuable guidance in any particular case which falls to be dealt with. The adaptation of the matter and methods of instruction to the existing conditions and the more immediate possibilities of each locality call for very careful consideration. In conference with those who are familiar with local circumstances, expert officers of the Department can do much to work out schemes of technical instruction which will not only benefit those who are wise enough to follow them, but will appeal to the younger members of the community with sufficient force to secure their attendance. An early prospect of personal advantage is more required as an incentive in some places than in others, but in every place some such prospect is a necessary feature of instruction where attendance is voluntary. These considerations emphasise the importance of distinguishing, at least after the lower stages of continuation class work, the type of teaching required by those whose occupations are certain to be essentially manual and that required for those for whom manual work will be unnecessary, except it may be as a preparation for duties of supervision or design. It is in dealing with such differences that special advantage attaches to the conference of local committees with expert advisers who have opportunities of noting the result of experiments tried in many places and under varied conditions.

Conditions and
methods of
Technical
Instruction.

190. The Act establishing the Department designates it a "Department of Agriculture and other Industries and Technical Instruction for Ireland." The Section dealing with expenditure of funds (Sec. 16), however, after making provision for certain specific objects, including Technical Instruction, prescribes that the surplus shall be applied "for the purposes of Agriculture and other rural Industries or sea Fisheries." The powers of the Department in the direction of promoting, improving or advancing industries other than rural, are thus limited to what can be done under the name of "Technical Instruction." This expression is defined in the following passage of Section 30 of the Act:—

Powers conferred
by the Act.

"The expression 'Technical Instruction' means instruction in the principles of science and art applicable to industries, and in the application of special branches of science and art to specific industries or employments. It shall not include instruction given in elementary schools or teaching the practice of any trade or industry or employment, but more as aforesaid shall include instruction in the branches of science and art with respect to which grants are for the time being made by the Department, and another form of instruction (including modern language and commercial subjects) which may for the time being be sanctioned by the Department, by a minute laid before Parliament and made on the representation of a county or urban district council that such form of instruction is required by the circumstances of its district, and shall also include instruction in the use of tools, and modelling in clay, wood, or other material."

191. The Department has shown a keen desire to promote Irish industries, and the efforts made in this direction have taken many forms. The special circumstances affecting the development of individual industries vary almost as much as the industries; and, indeed, the conditions under which any particular industry will flourish are not alike in different parts of the country. There are, however, certain aspects of preliminary education and certain sections of technical education affecting both the producing and the distributing relations of industries, that are of so wide application as to require first attention in almost all parts of the country; and it has been the duty of the Department to cover the country as speedily as possible with a network of facilities for such education. We have pointed out above that while aiming at the development of schemes of work which would in the end provide for continuous training of young men and women throughout the years during which, now-a-days, they may be in part at least under instruction, the Department has had to establish many agencies and many methods of work which are necessarily of but temporary application. Something has had to be done for youths who are capable of higher things, but have reached the age of 18 or 20 with no formal education beyond that which they received before leaving the National School at 13. In commercial, as in manufacturing, subjects, men whose knowledge of the subject-matter of study was not on the liberal scale proper for teachers had to be accepted as instructors while they were themselves broadening their outlook and while others were being trained by the more lengthy but more effective process mapped out for the future. For Day Schools, Laboratories had to be provided, and teachers trained to use these in the education of the pupils; for Evening Schools, technical appliances for demonstration of principles applied in industries had to be made available for the instruction of many whose preliminary education fell much short of what it should be; while younger students were pressed to enter upon a longer course of study which would in the end enable them to obtain much greater benefit from the use of these same appliances. So, in almost every relation of the educational work of the Department, any steady progress towards a satisfactory ideal has necessarily been concurrent with efforts to do the best for those who will shortly pass beyond the reach of the influence of any school, day or evening.

192. In estimating the value of the efforts of the Department to promote the industrial welfare of Ireland by Technical Instruction, we must therefore keep in view both the passing and the permanent aspects of the work. It is not in every case possible to distinguish these. Broadly speaking, however, the former consists in the enriching and multiplying of the classes for instruction in the evening that were represented by the classes under the Department of Science and Art; in the establishment of specialised trade classes, combining instruction in the principles underlying the trade processes with just the minimum of teaching of science necessary to enable the students to understand these at all; special courses of instruction for teachers and generally forms of instruction calculated to turn to good account very limited periods of study. Even attendance at well-arranged evening courses for a couple of years has been shown to be of very great assistance in helping young clerks, carpenters, engineers, plumbers, or others engaged in skilled trades, to fit themselves for better work and more responsible positions in their employments. Similar classes bearing upon domestic arts have done much for young women who had not passed the period when they might be expected to devote two or three evenings a week to study for a couple of years. Again, classes for Manual Instruction and for Drawing have found a wider field of usefulness. No doubt in the past few years many students have been content to take instruction of this kind alone, not following it up by further specific work; yet the training they have thus received has been of definite advantage to them. Such classes represent a portion of technical training which must find a prominent place in the earlier years of any course of instruction; and until full provision is made for training in these subjects during the Elementary School period, facilities must continue to be afforded for such work in Evening Classes. We have been gratified to find how wide and how full has been the appreciation of the Manual Training and Drawing Instruction already

given, whether in Day Schools or in short local courses for those who have left school, and we are confident that public opinion will give full support to any extension of such instruction which the central and local authorities may concur in pressing.

193. The latter aspect of the work again—the permanent—is illustrated by the almost universal inclusion of an educative course of training in experimental science and in drawing in the curriculum of Secondary Schools; by the pushing forward of the provision for advanced Technical Courses of instruction in Day Classes in Central Institutions; and by the organisation of schools and classes for Further Education—especially further *Technical Education*—which has now been definitely placed before the country in the Revised Scheme for the administration and distribution of grants to schools other than Day Secondary Schools, issued last year.

Permanent
methods.

194. In Secondary Schools and Technical Colleges, those who have from boyhood a clear prospect of occupying in industry or commerce any of the more important—more influential—positions, will obtain an education which should fit them to acquire readily and in full measure the power of gauging the relative importance of affairs and of adapting their methods of manufacture or business to whatever changes may arise in the conditions. For the higher training of those whose initial advantages give them special opportunities of leading in the commercial and industrial advancement of the people, the country must look to the development of the education given in Intermediate schools and in institutions for more advanced and for specialised education of various kinds, whether provided in the Royal College of Science, the Metropolitan School of Art, Provincial Technical Schools, or the Universities.

Whole time
Training.

195. Much, however, of the best talent is to be found among those who may not have in early years the advantage of prolonged continuous education, and if any youth of parts is to have a fair chance of the success in life for which his talents qualify him, an important stage of his education must be obtained in Evening Classes. We think that in the great organisation of Evening Classes outlined in the Revised Scheme, to which we have already referred as issued last year by the Department, there should be found instruction suitable for the thousands of young men and women who enter on the occupations of their life without having had an opportunity of benefiting by the higher teaching available in Day Classes. We have already indicated that the possibilities of work under this scheme are not as yet fully realised, and we would draw special attention to its importance as putting clearly the organisation at which in this section the activity of the Department aims.

Part-time
Training.

196. The courses of instruction described in the scheme include a Preparatory Course for those whose elementary education requires to be brought to bear more accurately upon their technical requirements, and Specialised Courses in commercial subjects, in Science and in Art, and in these applied to any trade or industry, in languages, in handicraft, and in domestic science. We are of opinion that the method of work in technical education there set forth promises to be well adapted to the needs of the urban centres of population in Ireland. At the same time we recognise that even yet in few of these centres has the organisation of technical education been carried so far as to secure the full advantage of the scheme, indeed it is only in urban centres of some importance that there would be sufficient field to justify the maintenance of institutions affording classes throughout the range described. At the same time, the scheme has been so drawn that, in the lower grades of work for which it prescribes grants, there may well be arranged courses of technical instruction which will go far to meet the needs of students whose apprenticeship, or other earlier period of industrial or commercial work, is passed in some of the smaller centres where advanced courses cannot be provided.

Evening Schools.

For such smaller centres and for rural areas, however, the obstacle to complete organisation that arises from the separate control of the lower Evening Continuation Classes under the National Board, is at least as serious as it is in the County Boroughs where the Local Authorities have already felt the difficulty acutely. Evening Schools for pupils of lower attainments than those whose case the Department's Scheme meets, have to

serve a double purpose; in them pupils of promise and of energy who have left the Elementary School before completing an Elementary Education must find the assistance and guidance they need to raise them to the standard at which the technical education proper for them begins. Others who are likely to find their life work in industrial employment of a less exacting kind, or in so-called unskilled labour, ought to have the advantage of a few years of evening class attendance under instruction which would at once interest them, help them to become more efficient workers, and enable them to enter with more intelligence into the activities of the community and upon their duties as citizens.

Practical aim in
Primary Schools.

197. We must emphasise the importance of the influence of the *practical* aim in primary and higher primary education. It ought to have a marked influence in the selection of matter and of method alike in the Elementary Day Schools and in the lower grade of Evening Schools to which the social and economic exigencies of the time relegate the completion and expansion of much of the work of Day Schools. A practical bias in Elementary Education is of great value in relation to the future of industries, not so much in respect of the knowledge imparted to the pupils, as on account of the influence on mental turn, almost on character, which it may have—an influence depending upon the cultivation of all the powers, those of hand and eye as well as those of mind. In but a small part of Ireland are industries at present so much developed, so far a part of the national life, or so effective in relation to mental and manual powers, as to play the part they do in communities where industries have been uninterrupted for a century. There are some parts of Ireland where other conditions are favourable for industrial development, and if industries are to have a really good chance there, the education given in the schools—day and evening—must do what can be done in school life to aid in the development. Too much should not be expected from the schools, but whatever they can do, they ought to do.

Some Special
Courses.

198. The Revised Scheme contains provisions for certain other methods of Technical Education which are at present under trial—Day Technical Classes, Day Technical Schools, and Courses in Science or Drawing for Teachers. It is unnecessary at this point to say more as to these than that there must be frequent need for trying special methods in particular places or at particular times. The experience of the work of the Department in the past five years has shown clearly that experiment in methods of educational organisation is most essential.

HOME OCCUPATIONS AND INDUSTRIES.

Domestic Arts.

Fletcher, 2207-6

2293-501,

2291-6.

Fletcher, 2211.

See also, 2215-70

Bean-an-Tighe
Classes.

Campbell, 1472.

199. Instruction in Domestic Arts has been included in the several County Schemes, and has proved a very acceptable form of Technical Instruction; it is one in which the initial years have served to show of how great advantage would be a fully effective system of including such teaching in every school course. We have already referred to the advance that has been made in this respect in Secondary Schools for Girls, and in the training of Teachers who are to work in these and other schools, or as itinerant teachers in rural areas. When the existing difficulties in the matter of suitable buildings and equipment have been overcome, there can be little doubt that the influence of such teaching will become as widespread as it is beneficial. We refer below to the question of buildings generally, and we have already dealt with the teaching of Domestic Arts in Primary Schools, to the steps taken for the extension of that teaching, and to the need for still further effort in that direction.

200. One development of the ideal to be aimed at in the training of girls for women's work has been set out in the "Bean-an-Tighe" (the woman of the house) Scheme. Under this there is suggested not only instruction in the various arts which go to make the home more healthy, comfortable and attractive, and to cultivate economy in food and dress and cooking, sewing, knitting, mending, washing, ironing, sick-nursing, but also training in rural occupations which fall to the woman, dairying, poultry-keeping and the like. With such work there is associated the teaching of lace or crochet work or such other home industries as may be likely in each locality to

enable girls and women to utilize their spare time so as to increase the earnings of the family. In the Bean-an-Tighe Scheme, which is set out at length in the memorandum quoted in Appendix II., provision is made for the establishment of centres of this type which may be in buildings set aside for the purpose, or in the home of a religious community, or of a private individual.

201. Hitherto, however, the great part of the instruction in Home Industries which has been provided under the Department's Schemes has been carried on by itinerant instructors. In this form it has met with a gratifying measure of success, although it is still far from being as widely distributed as is desirable. By Section 18 of the Act the operations of the Department were excluded from the Congested Districts, but this restriction was removed by the repeal of that Section in 1903. Since that year it has not been necessary to observe any distinction in the working of the Schemes within the counties which contain "congested" areas; it may be noted, however, in passing, that this change was not accompanied by any increase in the funds of the Department for the promotion of such instruction. In the Congested Districts the Congested Districts Board had organised a system of development of Home Industries in accordance with which the teacher, after a time, devotes much of her attention to supervising and arranging the work of those she has already taught, the school becoming in effect a commercial undertaking. In these areas the Department and the Congested Districts Board now work in concert, so that the difficulties of dual control are minimised. At the same time, in this, as in other matters, it would be of direct advantage to have the administration of State assistance concentrated. It is probably, however, unnecessary that any action should be taken in this matter pending the result of the labours of the Royal Commission on Congestion in Ireland.

Appendix II.

Home Industries

Fletcher, 2209.
2202.

2237.

RELATION OF TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION TO INDUSTRIES.

202. We think that there is every reason to hope that the methods which we have described as adopted by the Department in carrying out the provisions of the Act for the promotion of the industrial welfare of Ireland by means of Technical Instruction, will do much to further that object. The methods have been characterised by an elasticity which has enabled the Department to deal with the immediate necessities of the case without detriment to the ultimate establishment of a more complete system. Indeed, the experience thus gained of the variety of method required for the temporary needs, has afforded valuable guidance as to the lines for later work, and it has shown that there is no finality in the method. The principle on which the Department has acted has been to adapt its methods to the conditions under which the work has to be carried on. This principle, we think, should be carefully observed.

Efficiency of
methods of
Technical
Instruction.

203. One of the conditions to which continuous attention should be paid, at least so long as the industrial value of education is not generally realised, is that the work of the technical classes in each locality should be arranged so as to have as obvious as possible a bearing upon the employments in which the youth are most likely to improve the market for their labours. This is not always easy; it is especially difficult in communities where there is an absence of activity in industrial matters and an appearance of reluctance to change old methods of work. Enough has already been accomplished to demonstrate the bearing of the work of the schools upon the interests of those engaged in what may be regarded as the middle-grade of commercial and industrial work. A longer period of well-conceived effort is obviously necessary to effect any improvement on industries by attention to the technical education of those whose earning power depends upon intelligent and accurate handwork; yet we believe that if the educational machinery of the country were improved in the respects to which we have here drawn attention, the prospects of industrial development would steadily improve.

Relations of
such work to
remunerative
results.

204. The powers of the Department in relation to industries other than Agriculture and Rural Industries are restricted by the terms of the Act, and we are not satisfied that a clear line of limitation has been maintained

Restriction of
powers given by
the Act.

in the application of funds with a view to the advancement of industrial efficiency. The varied character of the industries to which attention had to be given has, no doubt, done much to obscure the line laid down by the Act; and the title of the Act arouses an expectation of aid to industries generally, which is not supported by any provision in the Act. Provision is made for general aid to Agriculture and other *Rural* industries, but for industries not rural the only aid specifically available is that by Technical Instruction. It appears that, in the light of the experience gained in the course of the past five years, the Department has now arrived at the position that, in the case of non-rural industries, the funds allotted to technical instruction by the Act may be applied to the cost of instruction in trade-methods in so far only as that instruction is necessary to illustrate corresponding instruction in the principles that underlie the practice concerned; that these funds cannot be applied towards the cost of making workers expert in manipulation or towards the financing of an industry.

Demand for
further aid to
industries other
than rural.

205. We have had evidence to show that in a large part of Ireland urban industries cannot be re-established without further aid than is proper under this limitation. It has been pointed out to us that, in the development of an industry involving operations new to the population of a locality, the preliminary period of non-profitable effort through which each individual worker has to pass, is of much greater length than can be faced under ordinary conditions, and that the business as a whole is handicapped on this account as well as by the special difficulty of securing a market for goods produced in a new locality.

We learn, too, that there is a special difficulty in obtaining capital for manufacturing or other industrial ventures established in parts of Ireland which have no existing connection with such enterprise.

It is obvious that aid of a financial kind—whether direct or indirect—to enable new industrial projects to overcome initial difficulties, is beyond the scope of the Act, and we are of opinion that whatever aid may at any time be given in this direction ought to be quite distinct from aid by technical instruction. It would be highly undesirable to combine with the cost of a well understood service like education, grants in aid of industries, grants which would in any case require special justification, and would have to be governed by conditions of a special character. The administration of grants in aid of industries would, indeed, be subject to considerations, and would require experience quite different from those pertinent to educational work; this administration would, therefore, have to be in the hands of officers whose training had been on lines different from those charged with duties related to Technical Instruction.

It appears to us that some of the demands which have been made upon the Department have been beyond the limits within which, according to the proper interpretation of the Act of 1899, the action of the Department should be confined; and, indeed, in some cases the Department itself has, we think, overstepped these limits. We do not feel called upon to discuss the question whether, either for the purpose of developing industry and trade, or for the purpose of providing employment for the poorer classes of the Irish urban population, or for both purposes combined, a large expenditure of public money is justifiable or would be likely to be of ultimate benefit to Ireland, or whether the action of the State should be confined to providing the means of instruction best calculated to enable Irish workers to take full advantage of such opportunities as already exist or may hereafter be created by private enterprise.

Whatever view may be taken on the larger question, it appears to us that the financing of industries, such as the Kilkenny Woollen Mills, lies altogether outside the proper sphere of the Department's operations. We have seen that, as regards Agriculture, the establishment of a special industry, even though it had not previously existed in Ireland, and was established for an educational and not a commercial object, aroused such opposition that it was brought to a premature end. Similar difficulties would, in our opinion, inevitably arise in Ireland if the Department were entrusted with the administration of State aid to specially

See paragraph 173.

selected industries, and we think, therefore, that the lines laid down by the Act are right, and that the Department's endowment should be expended only upon instruction which falls within the definition given in the Act.

206. There is, however, one restriction in Section 30 of the Act of 1899, quoted above, which is somewhat obscure and embarrassing—"technical instruction" is not to include "teaching the practice of any trade or industry or employment." The definition of technical instruction contained in the Act was taken from the Technical Instruction Act, 1889, an Act which as regards England was repealed and superseded by the Education Act, 1902. The textual limitation, therefore, no longer applies to England; there, however, there are other very real limitations. The Act of 1902 provides that the supply of *all* forms of Education other than Elementary is in England a duty laid upon Local Authorities who are to take action in this matter after consultation with the Board of Education, and who are to apply for the purpose all or as much as they deem necessary, of the residue under Section 1 of the Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Act, 1890, commonly known as the "Whisky Money," together with such further sums raised by rates as they think fit. The demands upon the funds thus available include the maintenance of Secondary Schools, facilities for Training of Teachers, grants in aid of University Colleges, expenditure on Scholarship Schemes and on Agricultural Education, as well as Technical Instruction in the sense in which the term is used in the Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act. Teaching the practice of a trade or industry or employment can be provided under the English Act in so far only as the teaching falls under the head of Education; and, in view of the cost of the many agencies that are already chargeable against the funds for Higher Education, any work of this kind which a Local Authority might undertake would entail in practice an additional call for funds, which would fall to be met from rates. Proposals of the sort would thus be subject to the strictest scrutiny, both as to character and as to the advantage likely to be conferred on the community. Such conditions appear to afford sufficient safeguard against a Local Authority assuming duties in industrial training that ought to rest with individual employers and manufacturers. We think that the application of similar considerations in Ireland would suffice, without the limitation prescribed by the Act in specifically excluding "teaching the practice of any trade or industry or employment." We recognise that in much of the educational work which is undoubtedly authorised by the Act, it is necessary to enforce lessons on principles, on materials, or of method, by a certain amount of practical work which may well be, and indeed often must be, of a definitely trade character. Such practical work is for educational purposes, and clearly falls within the limits of the Act. On the assumption that in any future legislation on this subject it is made clear that the application of the funds devoted to technical instruction should all be within the sphere of education, the reference to teaching the "practice of a trade" as a limitation to "technical instruction" should be removed from the Act.

It has been represented to us that the provision in Section 30 (1) of the Act, that "Technical Instruction" shall not include instruction given in Elementary Schools," places an artificial restriction in the way of utilising as fully as possible the services of local instructors in Domestic Arts, and in Manual Training. Such practical instruction is often, as a matter of fact, more conveniently given in another place than the National School, in which case the legal difficulty would not arise. At the same time the complication involved in this matter is a striking example of the objections to the great sub-division of the administration of the educational field in Ireland. It is clear that as manual training and instruction in the Domestic Arts ought to be, in the fullest sense, elements in the education provided by the primary schools, the payment of grants in aid of these, and the administration of such grants, ought to be in the same hands as other matters concerned in the elementary schools. It would be an obvious economy that the trained technical teachers in the districts should take part in such teaching. In any changes that may be made by legislation any barrier against their doing so should be removed.

Terms of the
definition of
"Technical
Instruction."

CENTRAL INSTITUTIONS.

- Institutions transferred to Department.** 207. The powers and duties of the Department of Science and Art which were transferred to the new Department in 1889, carried the administration of several important central Institutions. We do not find it necessary to deal with these in detail, but we may say generally that several of them have been brought into closer relations with the other activities for which the Department is responsible. Thus, the Botanic Garden Staff lend useful aid in the development of schemes bearing on Horticulture. Again, part of the work of the College of Science forms a section of the course of instruction in Agriculture for those who are to be instructors in Agriculture. In its main function, however, as an institution for advanced study in Science and for the training of teachers of Science, the College has been greatly hampered by the very narrow limits of space available. A new building for it is now in course of erection, and the place of the College in the educational system of Ireland will doubtless form matter of careful consideration before that building nears completion.
- Botanic Gardens.**
- College of Science.**
- National Library.** 208. We made no special enquiry as to the National Library, and inasmuch as another Committee was dealing with the relations of the Metropolitan School of Art we refrained from dealing with that institution; at the same time we were impressed by the necessity that it should be related as definitely as possible, to the teaching of Art in the other schools of the country, and in particular to the movement for affording what guidance experts can give in the early stages of developing minor art crafts.
- Metropolitan School of Art.**
- Museum of Science and Art.** 209. The manner in which the Department has administered the Museum of Science and Art was criticised by representatives of the Board of Visitors of the Museum. We think that it is a matter for regret that there has not been greater confidence between the Department and the Visitors, as we are satisfied that the difficulties which have arisen might well have been prevented by occasional personal interviews at an early stage of the new administration. Under the Department the Museum staff as a whole has been increased, but the Museum interests have been occasionally allowed to suffer by the withdrawal of senior officers for increased duties in connection with other work under the Department. Notwithstanding this, we recognise that much has been done in the past six years, to increase the usefulness of the Museum. Judicious additions to the collections, well-considered methods of exhibition and energetic production of cheap guide-handbooks show that the development of the Museum has not been neglected. We wish to note in particular the organisation of a system of circulating to schools and local classes carefully selected objects with good descriptive labels. These bring simple examples before young people of school age who are not likely to be able to visit the Museum in Dublin. The system is really an arrangement for giving some of the advantages of school museums to schools not in a position to provide collections for themselves. It is a part of the school organisation which gains in convenience and in economy by being centred in the Museum.

BUILDINGS.

- Assistance required for cost of buildings** 210. We have had much evidence of the difficulty Local Authorities have found in providing suitable buildings for the work of technical instruction. Hasty action, involving capital expenditure for the purpose of simplifying arrangements for the accommodation of classes, was clearly inadvisable in the early years of the work, when neither the Local Authorities nor the Department could have gauged in all cases the extent or character of the accommodation which was necessary. In very many places now, however, there has been sufficient experience of the work of technical instruction to form a basis for determining the type of rooms and appliances which would afford greatest facilities for the work to be done. The question of buildings has thus now become one requiring very early attention. Not a few Urban Local Authorities have already taken action in it, and the liabilities which they have incurred, or may soon incur, for the cost of erecting and equipping buildings for technical classes are causing them

some anxiety. They anticipate that unless they receive some special assistance in this matter they will be crippled in their actual teaching operations. It is, however, possible that some of them at least may find that the more liberal scale of grants available under the Revised Scheme for the application of the annual Parliamentary Grant will enable them to meet the additional cost of extended and improved classes without any increased subsidy from the Department's endowment. Where this proves to be the case, they may be able to continue to face the payments of interest and to sinking funds in respect of their buildings, and yet to utilise fully the accommodation they have had the courage to provide. Nevertheless, even in those areas, it is desirable that some special assistance may be available in order that no serious drag be put upon the progress of Technical Instruction by the inadequacy of funds for the maintenance of facilities for which accommodation is provided.

211. In Urban areas the case might be met by an arrangement under which grants in aid of building would be made under conditions which would tend to promote among Local Education Authorities due financial foresight and a determination to see that nothing was left undone to secure full benefit of Parliamentary Grants available as sources of income. Thus in connection with every application for whatever aid may be made possible in the case of buildings there should be a careful examination (1) of a detailed estimate of the probable income and expenditure in connection with the maintenance of the facilities for which the proposed building was intended to provide, and (2) as to the probability that advantage would be taken of these facilities in the special field concerned. It is of obvious benefit that there should be a clear understanding upon such matters before capital expenditure is undertaken or grants are authorised in aid of such expenditure.

Buildings in
Urban areas.

212. In Rural areas it may be found practicable to make more use of existing buildings for educational purposes. In these areas, however, the problem has a wider application, for, while in many localities the National Schools and what private buildings are moderately suitable for class purposes may meet the case, there are others, and many of these are localities of considerable populations, where something is required in addition to the accommodation thus available. The work fostered by the Agricultural Branch of the Department, as well as that under the Technical Branch, requires some centre of operations the use of which will be free from the complications that arise in the National School. In addition to all such classes, however, there are not a few other activities in a rural area, some clearly educational, some largely philanthropic, and some frankly recreative, which require occasional accommodation of a kind which is at present represented in but a few more fortunate places. The provision of Village Halls is a matter which directly and indirectly bears very strongly on the educational, social and economic interests of the people. The education secured by many of the influences here contemplated is, no doubt, too informal to be within the scope of the Act; but it is so pertinent to the objects which the Act aims at promoting that we feel bound to commend for favourable consideration certain proposals which have been put before us as likely to help in this end. It may be found that no uniform scheme could be adopted, and there is, therefore, the more need to record any which, in one place or another, has been found to give, or promises to give, good results.

Buildings in
Rural areas.

213. The value of any such local opportunities as are represented by the existence of Village Halls depends upon effective local effort in making occasions for using them to good purpose. It is, therefore, well that, as in the Department's scheme for loans on such halls, real local support should be forthcoming for the erection of the building. The public spirit which produces this initial support is the best guarantee of subsequent interest in the educational and social life that would centre round the hall.

Village Halls.

A convenient summary of the views that have come before us on this matter is afforded in the evidence given by Mr. M. A. Ennis, J.P., who was deputed to appear before us on behalf of the Irish County Councils:

General Council as well as on behalf of the Wexford County Council and the Wexford Municipal Technical Institute. He said:—

11002.

"We in the County Wexford have founded several village halls with the aid of the Department, and there was a resolution passed at the meeting of the Irish General Council of County Councils on the 25th of August, on the motion of Mr. Thomas Power (Waterford), seconded by Mr. H. Brennan (Sligo):—

"That in view of the immediate pressing need of suitable buildings in rural and urban centres for purposes of itinerant technical instruction and instruction in agriculture, it is advisable that County Councils should acquire rural courthouses and discontinued bridewells in towns, and, subject to the necessary employment of the former for petty sessions, that they should place these buildings in the control of the County Committees of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, to be used by them for the various purposes of itinerant technical instruction and instruction in agriculture, and also for village libraries. That the County Council, when necessary or advisable, should purchase these buildings, and have control of same, with powers to enlarge, or otherwise render them suitable for the purposes of Committees; and that the Department should contribute towards their enlargement and maintenance."

"Now, I should like to support, as far as possible, what Mr. Power advocated here to-day, that is, that in the rural districts of Ireland these petty sessions courts, which are locked up, nearly all the rural petty sessions being only held once a month, and seeing that buildings for the purpose of technical instruction and amusement are sadly needed in country districts, I think that, whilst making all provisions for the use of these courthouses for special courts, or whenever necessary, that at other times they should be utilised for local purposes, but the numbers of these buildings would not be sufficient to cover all the needs, there are twelve petty sessions districts in Wexford, and some of these are in the towns, so the number of rural petty sessions courts would not probably exceed eight or nine; that would be an inadequate number for thirty-five parishes, and therefore we suggest that help should be given by the County Committee, aided by the Department, towards the provision of village halls in each parish to serve the purposes of affording facilities for education and healthy rational amusement to the people, village libraries and rooms where the people of the parish can meet, and that these halls should be under the control of the local Committee, and in exchange for a contribution made towards their erection and maintenance by the Department and County Committee, that the Department and County Committee should have the use of them at all times for lectures and manual instruction, and other purposes. In the last two sessions of work connected with my County Committee the Department have sanctioned grants for some of these purposes, and we believe the Department have at present in hand a scheme in connection with village halls for the advance of money at a low rate of interest."

These halls would be principally

11003.

"For utilisation for the purpose of technical schools. It is not suggested that the total cost should be provided."

As to the balance required in addition to what was advanced by the Department.

11005.

"The locality would provide the money out of private subscriptions. The scheme of the Department is that a local Committee should be formed who would undertake the repayment of principal and interest within ten years of the sum of money to be granted. Personally I fear that would be found to be rather unworkable, and I would prefer to see an arrangement whereby any locality which took a sufficient interest in the work to provide two-thirds of the proposed amount would receive a free grant of one-third in return for the use of the building at all times needed by the Department and its Committee."

Wexford, to which the experience and project quoted by Mr. Ennis refers, is no doubt an exceptional county, but Mr. Ennis expressed the opinion that a large number of the Irish counties could be relied upon to provide funds for the purpose if they received the assistance he indicated. The assistance which the scheme of the Department offers in this matter is, of course, measured by the necessities of technical instruction, but there appears to us to be no reason why, within that limitation, the scheme might not be worked so as to secure for the country all, or at least most of, the advantages contemplated.

Estimate of
assistance
required for
Technical School
buildings.

Rev. P. J. Dowling,
1898-99.

214. The Association of Technical Institutions has put before us an estimate, based upon a careful enquiry, as to the cost of providing suitable buildings for technical instruction. It places this at an annual sum of not less than £20,000, or a corresponding capital amount. We have not verified this estimate, but we believe it gives a fair indication of the magnitude of the call upon building and equipment in respect of schools required for the work of instruction. Of course, the commitments of various Local Authorities for expenditure on work already completed, or in hand, are responsible for part, but only part, of this estimate.

VI.

TRANSFERRED POWERS AND DUTIES.

In addition to the new powers and duties with which the Department is directly charged by the Act, a number of duties previously discharged by other Departments were transferred. These are enumerated in Section 2, and Section 4 authorises the Lord Lieutenant to transfer to the Department the powers and duties of other Government Departments in Ireland. Of the powers and duties thus transferred, those relating to Technical Instruction have been dealt with under that head. Those of the Inspectors of Fisheries have been mentioned under the head of Fisheries. There remain those relating to Agriculture.

215. Prior to the transfer effected by Section 2, which came into operation on 1st April, 1900, the Veterinary Department of the Privy Council was the Central Authority charged with the duty of the administration of the Acts for the prevention of contagious diseases in animals, the local execution of these Acts being vested in the Boards of Guardians and the County Borough Councils as the Local Authorities, and in the Police. The powers and duties of the Central Authority, together with the Staff engaged in connection with it, which was also transferred to the Department, have been assigned to the special care of a Veterinary Branch.

The diseases dealt with under the Diseases of Animals Acts, and under Orders made by the Department pursuant to the powers conferred upon them, are eleven, viz.: "Cattle Plague, Pleuro-Pneumonia, Foot and Mouth Disease, Anthrax, Rabies, Swine Fever, Sheep Pox, Sheep Scab, Glanders, Parasitic Mange, Epizootic Lymphangitis. The Department have also power to make regulations regarding the transit of animals by rail and sea, and the importation of animals from other countries. There are at present 28 general Orders in force relating to diseases or animal transit." Mr. Cantrell, who has been Chief Clerk of the Veterinary Department from 1878 to 1900, and was transferred with the Staff, is now Chief Clerk of the Department of Agriculture, and is charged, along with the other duties detailed in his evidence, with the general administrative work of the Veterinary Branch.

Mr. Matthew Hedley, V.S., Chief Veterinary Inspector, was also transferred, and under these Officials the work of the Diseases of Animals Acts continues as before.

The new development of the work of the Veterinary Branch under the Department in connection with the transit of agricultural produce has been dealt with in paragraph 122. Complaints were made against this Branch of laxity in their efforts to stamp out Swine Fever, and in permitting the introduction of Epizootic Lymphangitis and Glanders. The first of these charges was made by Mr. Joseph Mooney, and seems to be fully answered by the facts and figures quoted in the evidence of Mr. Hedley, V.S. The second was made by Mr. Mooney, Mr. John Sweetman, and Mr. Watson, V.S., and seems to rest on no other foundation than that the diseases did not originate in this country, but were believed to have been introduced in the one case by Army horses, and in the other through some tramway horses from Glasgow. Both these matters were also dealt with by Mr. Hedley, and appear to us to have been sufficiently answered.

216. Several suggestions have been made for alterations in the existing law. Those that seem to us most important are (1) that the powers of the Local Government Board exercised through Public Health Officers in relation to the inspection of dairies and cowsheds should be transferred to the Department and exercised through their Veterinary Inspectors; (2) the enforcement of the Mallein test; (3) the establishment of Veterinary Dispensaries or other means of providing free or cheap veterinary assistance to farmers, more particularly in the poorer districts. These are matters well worthy of consideration. The establishment of Veterinary Dispensaries in particular raises questions of great importance, and of much difficulty.

Transfer of powers of Privy Council, Veterinary Department

Cantrell, 3237

3255-66

11624-65.

16215-3.

14526-6.

Mooney, 11648-54.

Sweetman, 14301-153.

Watson, 12056-70.

Hedley, 14318-15

Suggestions.

(1) Cameron, 13801-8.

Watson, 12072-91.

Keweney, 12667-6.

Hedley, 14396-40

(2) Watson, 12002-7

Hedley, 14340.

(3) Eadie, 11651.

Edger, 12092-3

Hynes, 6200.

Mason, 12205-24.

Hedley, 14321-36

Royal Veterinary
College.

217. Although the administration of the Royal Veterinary College has not been directly transferred to or vested in the Department, it may be convenient here to refer to the connection between that Institution and the Department consequent on the provisions of the Act.

Nixon, 14652.

The Royal Veterinary College was established by Charter in 1895, but although a Parliamentary Grant-in-aid of £15,000 had been promised by Mr. Morley, then Chief Secretary, the Government went out of office before the sanction of Parliament was obtained to the grant, and no funds were available until the passing of the Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act. The Charter provided for the creation of a Board of Governors, thirty-two in number, twelve of whom were to be nominated by the Crown, four by the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, and four by the subscribers.

By Section 16 (1) (a) of the Act it is provided that out of the Department's Endowment Fund "a capital sum, which shall not, save with the concurrence of the Agricultural Board, exceed £15,000, shall be applied "for the purpose of providing suitable buildings, fittings and appliances "for the Royal Veterinary College of Ireland." The application of this money was made "subject to any conditions which the Department may "require."

14652.

The Department required, previous to applying the capital money above referred to, that a scheme should be submitted to it for the working of the College, and that the Charter should be altered by increasing the number of Governors to forty, "the additional eight members thus provided "to be appointed by the Department."

18945.

These conditions were complied with, and the Department, with the concurrence of the Agricultural Board, granted the sum of £15,000 mentioned in the Act, and, in addition, a further capital sum of £5,000. A sum of £1,000 had also been obtained from the Royal Dublin Society. £20,000 had been expended in acquisition of site and erection of temporary and of permanent buildings, and the Governors were seeking, in addition, a further Grant of £10,000 from the Department. This, although it would not enable the original plan of the Governors to be carried out, would still afford sufficient accommodation.

10088.

14676.

Nixon, 14650.

Although the Department had the "keenest possible interest in the working of the Veterinary College," and "was extremely sympathetic towards the movement from its inception," a controversy had arisen with reference to this additional grant of £10,000, and to an annual grant of £400 in aid of current expenses claimed by the Governors, which was brought before us by Sir Christopher Nixon. The matter is still the subject of discussion between the Department and the Governors. We do not feel that we can usefully offer any observations.

Destructive
Insects Act.

218. No particular action appears to have been taken by the Department under the powers vested in it by this Act, which is entitled "An Act for preventing the introduction and spreading of insects destructive to crops," and was designed chiefly to give protection against the Colorado Beetle, nor does it appear from any evidence given to us that such action was called for during the period of its administration.

Fertilisers and
Feeding Stuffs
Act.

219. It would appear from the returns given in the annual reports that the number of persons sending samples of Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs for analysis has largely increased since the transfer to the Department of the powers formerly exercised by the Privy Council, but the extent to which the Act is being utilised still falls far short of what is necessary to give effectual protection to the purchasers of these articles.

The reasons why there has been a comparative failure, particularly amongst the smaller farmers, in taking advantage of the provisions of this Act, are set out in the evidence of Mr. E. H. O'Doherty, Secretary of the Donegal County Committee; Mr. John F. Boyle, Secretary of the Waterford County Committee; and Mr. W. J. Megaw, formerly Agricultural Instructor for County Down, but now in charge of Athenry Agricultural

O'Doherty, 7512-26

Boyle, 10695.

Megaw, 15395 3

Station, and who was deputed to give evidence on behalf of the Agricultural Instructors' Association. All these witnesses were agreed that the provisions of the Acts, particularly in regard to the taking of samples, were entirely too elaborate and cumbersome to be available to the ordinary farmer, and that the Acts would afford no real protection until the procedure was simplified.

220. The powers and duties of the Registrar-General with reference to statistics relating to Agriculture and those of the Irish Land Commission with reference to the collection and publication of returns of average prices of agricultural produce, which were transferred by Section 2 of the Act of 1899, were not prescribed or regulated by Statute. Subsequently, the duties performed by the Registrar-General in the collection and publication of the banking, railway and shipping statistics of Ireland were undertaken by the Department. The transfer of the duties of the Veterinary Department of the Privy Council, involved those relating to the statistics formerly compiled by that Department relating to imports and exports of live stock. The Department undertook, in addition, the task of compiling and publishing statistics relating to trade—import and export statistics—without which it was believed no adequate idea could be formed of the economic condition of Ireland. These statistics were entirely new, and owing to the fact that there is no customs barrier between Ireland and Great Britain, and that the information had to be collected from a variety of persons and bodies, most of whom were under no obligation to furnish information, the task was one of extreme difficulty. Statistics.

For these purposes, a Statistics and Intelligence Branch was formed, which was placed under the superintendence of the late Mr. W. P. Coyne, and after his death of Mr. W. G. S. Adams.

Outside the statistical work of this Branch there are other sections; the inquiry and intelligence work, the press editing and management of publication work, and the despatch and distribution work. These sections are also new, but may be regarded as a development of the statistical work, and inseparable from it. Adams, 2004-2072.

The statistical work transferred from the Registrar-General, the Irish Land Commission, and the Veterinary Department of the Privy Council, has been continued on practically the same lines as by those bodies previously, but the returns have been made more generally interesting and intelligible by the insertion of charts, diagrams and maps illustrating special features. Recently, the instructions to collectors have been thoroughly revised, with a view to securing greater accuracy, this action having been taken as the result of a discussion at the Council of Agriculture. 2009-014.

The details of these statistics, and of the procedure and powers of the Department in collecting them, will be fully found set out in Mr. Adams' evidence. Their value to all interested in agriculture, in the trade and commerce of the country, and in the development of its resources, can hardly be over-estimated. It is, above all, important that such returns should be accurate and reliable, and with a view to securing these conditions, it would appear that further statutory powers, particularly in the case of Trade Statistics, are desirable. 10261-105.

221. The powers and duties of the Irish Land Commission under the Acts mentioned in the margin are now vested in the Department, and no particular change has been made in the policy of their administration. A number of new weighing machines have been erected at various fairs, and exemption orders have been granted to a number of Market Authorities under the Department's powers wherever the sale of cattle is likely to be so small as to render it inexpedient to enforce the provisions of the Act. Markets and Fairs, Weighing of Cattle Acts, 1867 and 1891.

No evidence was offered to us on this subject.

VII. FINANCE.

Sources of
Revenue.

222. We are instructed by the Order of Reference to report upon the funds at the disposal of the Department and the modes of employing them. The revenue of the Department is derived (1) from what is called the Endowment Fund, (2) from interest on accumulations thereof, and (3) from Parliamentary votes. A statement of these funds and of the present position of the finances of the Department will be found in the Memorandum and Tables set out in the Appendix, XX.

The Endowment
Fund.

223. The Endowment Fund consists of (1) certain annual sums paid over to the Department each year under the provisions of the Act of 1899, (2) of capital sums allotted to the Department by the Act.

Annual Income.

224. (1) The annual income provided by Section 15 of the Act of 1899 consists of:—

- (a) A sum of £78,000 from the Local Taxation (Ireland) Account.
- (b) A sum of £70,000, being part of the annual income derived from the surplus of the Irish Church Temporalities Fund. This sum was made payable annually for fifteen years from the commencement of the Act. At the expiration of that time, the payment was to be of "such sum as, in the opinion of the Treasury, can be paid without impairing any of the securities existing at the commencement of the Act on that Fund."
- (c) A sum of £12,000 per annum was provided by a Parliamentary grant as an equivalent for the salaries of judgeships and other offices abolished or left vacant.
- (d) A sum of £8,000 per annum, being the amount of a Parliamentary grant paid to the National Education Board in connection with the Albert and Munster Institutions, as has already been stated.

Paragraph 35.

The total of the income thus provided was £166,000. In addition to this amount, £5,000 per annum, which previously had been paid annually out of the Local Taxation Account to the Royal Dublin Society, was transferred to the Department, and in 1903, by agreement, as already stated, an annual sum of £2,000 became payable to the Department by the Congested Districts Board. For this payment, however, there is no Parliamentary sanction, and it might be withdrawn at any time. In 1903-4, as has been explained, a contribution was made from the Ireland Development Grant for Technical Instruction of a sum of £3,500, and in 1904-5 this was increased to £7,000 per annum. Adding, therefore, these four last-mentioned sums to the original income of £166,000, the income of the Department since 1905 has been £180,000. This is subject, as already mentioned, to contingencies as regards the portion derived from the Irish Church Temporalities Fund and the contribution from the Congested Districts Board.

Col. 18524.

Capital.

225. The capital of the Endowment Fund consists of:—

- | | |
|--|---|
| (a) Three sums, being monies not required for the purpose of Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, Section 15 (g), | <div style="float: right; text-align: right;"> £166,886
 15,000
 3,129
 <hr/> £185,015 </div> |
| (b) Two sums, being Sea and Coast Fisheries Fund transferred to the Department by Section 15 (c), | <div style="float: right; text-align: right;"> £4,602
 443
 <hr/> £5,045 </div> |
| and | |
| (c) Transferred to the Department under the same section, but appropriated to Fishery purposes, as stated below, | <div style="float: right; text-align: right;"> £20,000
 Consols. </div> |

These sums form, strictly speaking, the capital of the Endowment Fund, and are so distinguished in the memorandum above referred to.

226. During the earlier part of the Department's operations, considerable savings were made out of the current income. By Section 16 (3 and 4) of the Act of 1899 it was provided that any money not expended in any financial year upon authorised purposes should be accumulated, and might be spent in any subsequent year upon these purposes. Accumulations might be invested in Trustee Securities. Under these powers investments were made, the details of which are given in the memorandum above mentioned. The amounts annually invested have largely diminished as the expenditure of the Department has increased. Thus, in 1900-1, £199,724 was invested and £129,000 carried forward, the net expenditure for the year being £26,776. On July 10th, 1906, the value of the investments held by the Department was £395,230. In addition, loans to the amount of £21,390 were outstanding for the various purposes mentioned previously in this Report.

Accumulations.

227. On April 1st, 1906, various appropriations of this fund had been made; these are enumerated in Table II. of the Memorandum, and amounted to £122,540. The Memorandum proceeds to deal with the balance of the sum of £395,230 remaining after deducting the above-mentioned sum of £122,540. Table III. shows the unexpended balance of the grants already made by the Agricultural Board which will fall to be paid when the works are undertaken and the schemes mature. These, in fact, are estimated liabilities which will probably have to be met in the near future. They amount to £139,960, reducing the accumulated savings to £132,730.

Appropriations of accumulated Funds.

1899.

The next Table (IV.) shows the estimated annual income of the Endowment Fund. Besides the contribution from the Congested Districts Board, there are two items which are more or less uncertain: these are the £70,000 at present secured until 1914, as above explained, and the item "interest on securities" and on monies deposited, say, £10,000. Having regard to the estimated position of the accumulated savings above stated, it seems to us that this interest cannot be relied on as a permanent asset. The available income of the Department must be taken, apart from any interest on the sum of £132,730, at £180,000.

Table V. shows the estimated annual expenditure to be met from the Endowment Fund. The expenditure on Technical Education from this source is £62,000, being the £55,000 allotted by Section 16 (1) (c) (i) of the Act of 1899, and the grant of £7,000 referred to on pages 9 and 114. The list of grants sanctioned with the concurrence of the Board of Technical Instruction, and the Agricultural Board, constitute, as the heading of the Table indicates, the estimate of the expenditure for the year 1906-7. The total amount of these grants is £197,000; adding to this the £11,000 per annum mentioned in the Table as grants not subject to such concurrence, the total estimated expenditure for that year comes to £208,000. This, of course, assumes that the whole of the covering estimates will be expended, which will probably not be the case.

228. Upon these figures the estimated expenditure exceeds the estimated income, excluding interest on investments, by £28,000 per annum. This £28,000 would, in about seven years, exhaust the remaining accumulation, which in July last stood at £132,700.

Financial position.

It has not been practicable for us to examine this estimated expenditure in detail. The principal items of expenditure, other than those connected with technical instruction, are itinerant instruction, £8,000; improvement of live stock, £12,000, and special investigations, £9,000. These are payments direct from the Endowment Fund and not contributions to the Joint Fund. Under the head of votes to County Committees the principal items are:—Live Stock Schemes, £15,000, and other Agricultural Schemes, £20,400.

Taking the view we do of the benefits which, in our opinion, are proved to have resulted and are likely to continue to result from the "methods of the Department," we are unable to say that any portion of the expenditure which these figures show has been excessive.

The questions which arise on the figures above set out would seem to be: (1) Can any economies be effected, and, if so, in what direction and by what means? (2) What, if any, additional funds are needed (a) to

equalise income and expenditure; (b) in view of the rapid development of the work of the Department, to carry out effectively the "purposes" of the Act of 1899?

Expenditure by
Agricultural
Board

Bishop of Ross,
1894-7
Lough, 18435-80.

18265-8.

874-916.

18286-76.

See 2064

Kontgomery,
3281-39.

Dunne, 2778.

Need for
economy.

2067

1705-8, 18631, 18459.

See Bishop of Ross,
2061.

229. If the provisions of the Act and methods of the Department lead to extravagance in expenditure they would not be "well suited to the conditions of Ireland." It is our duty to express our opinion whether the Act of 1899 or the methods which the Department has followed are fairly open to criticism on these grounds. The Act provides, with regard to the general surplus of the Endowment Funds, after the annual payments specified in Section 16 have been made, that the particular application of any portion of it can only be made with the concurrence of the Agricultural Board, or if the expenditure relates to Technical Instruction, of the Board of Technical Instruction. The working of this provision has been repeatedly illustrated in the course of this Report. The practice of the Agricultural Board is for a general vote to be taken upon any particular proposal of the Department on a special object, such, for instance, as the vote for the Cork Exhibition. After the expending of the money thus authorised, an account showing, in a summary form, the details of expenditure is periodically submitted to the Board. The full details of the expenditure are available for every member of the Board. The system and its working was fully discussed in the course of the examination of Mr. Arthur Lough, a member of the Council of Agriculture and of the Agricultural Board, who justified the working of the present system except in reference to one particular case. He thought the payments which were made to the officers of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society for the work done for the Department in the earlier years of its existence had not been properly brought before or explained to the Board. The origin and history of these payments has been already referred to, and was fully stated by Mr. Gill in evidence. With this exception, Mr. Lough, who was closely examined on the point, considered that the system worked well, and substantially conformed to the requirements of the Act. The approval of the Board is, as was pointed out by the Bishop of Ross, given generally to the project and to the estimate. The estimate is not often exact; probably, now more experience has been gained, more precise and detailed estimates will be laid before the Board in reference to special applications of the Endowment Fund. It seems that the procedure of approval of an estimate, and afterwards giving a covering sanction under certain heads, is a course which must necessarily be followed by a body constituted as the Agricultural Board is, and holding meetings at intervals of a few weeks. Everything turns on the care and accuracy with which the necessary information is supplied to the Board.

We had before us other members of the Agricultural Board and several members of the Council of Agriculture, and have examined the minutes of the Agricultural Board. We find no reason to dissent from the views expressed by the Bishop of Ross, and Mr. Lough, that the Agricultural Board does exercise careful and effective control over the expenditure of the Endowment Fund.

230. The question remains, assuming the Act to remain unaltered, in what direction can economies in the expenditure be looked for? The time seems to have come when the Department and the Agricultural Board are in a position to form some opinion as to the nature of the expenditure likely to produce the best results. For instance, as the Bishop of Ross points out, the great expenditure which in the early stages in the history of the Department was thought justifiable at the Cork Industrial Exhibition and St. Louis Exhibition, in order to show "who we were and what we were," would hardly be justifiable now.

Professor Campbell states that he thinks the Department, owing to the shortness of money, has reached its maximum expenditure on the Cattle Scheme. He admits that the time may come for reducing the expenditure because the object of the contribution—the improvement of the breeding of cattle—has been sufficiently attained, but thinks that time is remote. It may be that stall feeding and fattening cattle may become unremunerative owing to the great increase in the supply of foreign cattle, and then farmers would have to turn their attention more to dairying and

pig-breeding. All these considerations affect the future expenditure of the Department and show the necessity of close attention to economic conditions. We do not, however, see that there is at present a prospect of any reduction of this part of the Department's expenditure.

231. Table No. XXI in the Appendix shows the estimates framed for each of the years 1900-1 to 1906-7, of the amounts required for payment of the salaries and expenses of the Department, and of the services administered by the Department. In the criticisms which have been made of the magnitude of the expenditure of the Department, it seems to be frequently forgotten that the Act of 1899 not only provided for expenditure for purposes of agriculture and other rural industries, sea fisheries, and technical instruction, but also transferred to the Department a number of powers and duties previously vested in other branches of the Irish Government; and the grants which were formerly made in aid of the performance of the duties so transferred appear in the vote for the Department, and thus swell the total of that vote. Thus, the estimate for the Department's vote for the year 1906-7 was £191,526. Of this total, the votes for Salaries and Wages, Travelling, Special Services, Incidental Expenses, and Collection of Agricultural Statistics amounted to £62,010. To this must be added the annual vote of £18,000 (Sub-head E.) which forms part of the Department's Endowment under the provisions of Section 15 (d) (f). The remaining votes are in respect of administrative duties transferred to the Department under the provisions of Sections 2 and 4 of the Act of 1899. These votes relate to the administration of the Diseases of Animals Act; Institutions of Science and Art, Schools of Science and Art, and Geological Survey of Ireland. The total amount of these votes is £86,156. To this must be added the annual grant-in-aid for the Congested Districts Board of £25,000, which is included in the vote for the Department, for purposes of Parliamentary convenience. The Congested Districts Board have no representative in and no real responsibility to Parliament. The Department merely acts as the conduit pipe by which this amount of money is conveyed to the Congested Districts Board.

Parliamentary
Vote.

Gill, 18992.

G. Balfour, 11.

232. We believe that a misunderstanding of the character of the vote for the Department has, to some extent, given rise to comment which has been publicly made, though the matter has not been prominent in the evidence given before us, as to alleged unnecessary expenditure upon the Department's Staff. It appears not to be generally understood that the transferring to the Department of the duties of a large number of other departments necessitated also the transferring of the staffs of those various departments at their respective salaries. We see no reason whatever for the view that either the staffs so transferred or that of the Department in the discharge of the new duties created by the Act are redundant or over-paid, or that the organisation of the Department is justly chargeable with extravagance on this score. With regard to the sufficiency and salaries of the staff, we think the question stands thus:—The Act of 1899, Section 6, places the salaries of the staff of the Department upon the votes. The table set out in Appendix XXI. shows that the estimate of salaries and wages rose from £29,340 in 1900-1 to £47,980 in 1906-7. It has been strongly represented to us by the responsible officials of the Department that, notwithstanding the increase indicated by these figures, the development of the work has been so great that the Department is under-manned, and that many of the present staff are overworked. We think there is foundation for this statement, and that there is *prima facie* a strong case for consideration in detail what additions to the staff are required. Under the terms of the Reference, and having regard to the wide field covered by this Inquiry, it would not have been proper or possible for us to examine in detail the cases in which it is alleged that further assistance or revision of salaries is needed. That must be decided, as is usual in such cases, by discussion between the Department and the Treasury after, if necessary, a Departmental Inquiry on which the Treasury is represented. In our opinion, the right principle is that the salaries of all the officers who are reasonably required to carry out efficiently the "purposes" of the Act of 1899 should be placed upon the votes, and that none of these salaries should be charged

Staff of the
Department.

Flunkett, 12557-64.
Oll, 472, 488-99,
18973a-37334
Campbell, 2011-46,
2001-7, 12286-8.

upon the Endowment Fund, as some now are. No fresh legislation is required for this purpose, for Section 6 (1) of the Act of 1899 enacts that "the Department may, with the consent of the Lord Lieutenant and of the Treasury, appoint" a Secretary and Assistant Secretaries, "and such Inspectors, Instructors, Officers and Servants as the Department may require."

Expenditure on
Enquiries, &c.

233. In another respect, too, we think that the charges now borne by the Endowment Fund should be transferred to the votes. Section 5 of the Act of 1899 provides:—

"The Department may make, or cause to be made, or aid in making such enquiries, experiments, and researches, and collect or aid in collecting such information as they may think important for the purposes of agriculture and other rural industries;"

and Section 6 (3) provides that

"All expenses incurred by the Department in the exercise of their powers or the performance of their duties under this part of this Act, other than expenses incurred in relation to the Albert Institution and the Munster Institution, shall, save so far as they are otherwise provided for under any Act, to such amount as may be sanctioned by the Treasury, be paid out of money provided by Parliament."

We think that under the terms of these sections the Department is entitled to more liberal aid from the votes than it has yet received. The importance of research and experiments in reference to many matters comprised under the heads of Agriculture and other Rural Industries has been frequently referred to in this Report. We think the Department is entitled under these provisions to obtain substantial assistance from the votes for some, at all events, of the purposes mentioned in the section.

Expenditure on
Royal College of
Science.

234. Another case in reference to the Royal College of Science, in which it is claimed that the Endowment Fund is charged with an expenditure which ought to be borne by voted monies, is referred to in paragraph 40 of this Report. This and similar questions require consideration in detail between the Department and the Treasury.

Technical
Instruction
Grant.
"Equivalent
Grant."

235. There appears to be a considerable amount of misunderstanding with reference to the Technical Instruction Grants for Ireland originally on the Science and Art Department's Vote, and now represented by a fixed annual amount of £7,000 paid to the Department out of the Ireland Development Grant. These grants—applicable at first alike to Great Britain and Ireland—were continued specially from year to year as available for Ireland when withdrawn from England and Scotland, as the Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Act, 1899, gave power to Local Authorities in these countries to devote certain monies—the whiskey money—either to the relief of rates or to technical instruction.

By that Act, the English share of the Customs and Excise Duties was devoted in the first instance to police superannuation, while the residue was made available either for relief of rates or for technical education; the first charges in the Scotch share were police superannuation and the relief of school fees, while the residue was allotted in the first place to the cost of medical officers and sanitary inspectors, and as to the balance for relief of rates or for purposes of technical education; of the Irish share £78,000 was payable to the Commissioners of National Education, and the residue to the Intermediate Education Board. Thus, although all the Irish share was paid to Education Boards no part of it was made available for technical instruction. Accordingly the Technical Instruction Grants were continued for aid to technical instruction in Ireland other than of the type which was aided by the then existing scheme of the Science and Art Department; the programme of the Science and Art Department at that time included only a closed list of subjects and did not cover any courses of instruction applying science or art teaching to specific trades and industries—courses known as technological.

The Act of 1899, however, transferred to the new Department from the Commissioners of National Education the £78,000 per annum previously paid to the Commissioners. This sum was then placed at the disposal of the Department, for the promotion of Agriculture and of Technical Instruction as covered by a definition corresponding to that which covered the application of the whiskey money in England and Scotland, and which thus included the educational field for which the grant in aid of Technical Instruction—known in Ireland generally as the "Equivalent Grant"—had been given. This type

See Memorandum by
Mr. Brown, p. 126.

of instruction is now included in that for which grants are available under the Revised Scheme of the Department for the application of the grants on the Parliamentary vote. Apart from the Endowment Fund of the Department there is thus available in Ireland in name of such work, an annual amount of £7,000, together with the grants claimable under the Scheme, an amount which will increase automatically as the work done increases.

The misunderstanding in this matter arose from statements made in Parliament, when the Bill establishing the Department was before the House, and by the Department at a time when the hearing of the Act upon the matter was not fully appreciated. The position has since been explained in Parliament, and we should not have referred to it but that the explanation then given does not appear to have been generally noted.

236. We believe, however, that a portion of several of the charges for instruction—local instruction—now met from the Department's endowment might properly be recouped by grants from the Parliamentary Vote. All the cost of such instruction is now met from three sources:—Local Rates, the Department's Endowment (which may be taken in part at least to represent in this matter the whiskey money), and the Science and Art Grant. The following remarks apply only to certain items of expenditure which, as arranged under the Department, do not receive aid from the Science and Art Grant, but yet appear to be of a kind eligible for certain assistance from the Parliamentary Vote. These are:—

Incidence of Charges

- (a.) Summer Courses of training for Teachers other than those conducted in the College of Science.
- (b.) Courses in the Irish Training School of Domestic Economy.
- (c.) Courses of instruction in Agricultural Stations and Agricultural Schools and Classes.
- (d.) Classes conducted by Itinerant Instructors and Pioneer Lectures.
- (e.) Classes in Manual Instruction and Domestic Economy in Rural Districts.
- (f.) Courses in Poultry-keeping, Butter-making, Horticulture, and such subjects.

We would suggest that in the provision of educational facilities of the kind indicated a moiety of the expenditure from the Endowment Fund in respect of Salaries of Teachers for work done in teaching, should be recouped by a grant on the Department's Vote. Such a grant might come properly under the heading "Annual Grants, Science and Art." No travelling expenses or expenses of equipment, rent or maintenance of classes generally, should be reckoned in estimating the grant here suggested.

237. We have already explained the circumstances under which the Department took over in 1903 the agricultural work in the Congested Districts, and received in consideration of this undertaking an annual contribution from the Board of £2,000. This sum, it must be observed, was added to the Department's total income, and the Department was under no obligation to expend it solely in the Congested Districts. The Department has, as a matter of fact, spent this sum, and much more, upon the special needs of the Congested Districts. Previous to the arrangement above mentioned, the expenditure of the Congested Districts Board upon the work which was transferred to the Department had been at the rate of about £11,000 per annum, as already stated. If the £2,000 be considered, as, in fact it was, specially devoted to these districts, it will be seen from the Table set out in Appendix No. XIX. that the funds for this expenditure were provided from three sources:—(1) From the £2,000 contribution; (2) from the Department's contribution alone; (3) from the County rates alone. The expenditure of the Endowment Fund of the Department in each of the three years which have elapsed since the transfer may be ascertained by adding together the figures in the first two lines of the second part of the Table in Appendix XIX., and deducting in each case the Congested Districts Board's contribution of £2,000. This gives the expenditure of the Department in the Congested Districts as £3,217 in 1904-5; £4,694 in 1905-6; and £6,802 (estimated) for 1906-7. In each year the £2,000 was spent in addition to these sums. It should be mentioned that in January, 1907, the Agricultural Board gave a special grant of £4,000 for the Supplemental

Expenditure in Congested Districts.

Paragraphs 135-139.

Paragraph 133.

Schemes applying to these districts. The third item in the Table referred to shows how much of the contribution made by the rates to the Joint Fund has been expended in each year in the Congested Districts. These figures have been arrived at by calculations which we find represent the position with substantial accuracy.

Application of
Joint Fund in
Congested
Districts.

238. One difficulty arises in reference to the application of the Joint Fund in the Congested Districts. As has been stated, the Department's Endowment Fund contributes a somewhat larger proportion of the Joint Fund in counties containing congested areas than in other counties. Consequently, in a county containing a congested area, a district in the non-congested part of the county may derive special advantage under the operations of the Department. The Department pays to the county a lump sum in proportion to the total produce of the rate raised over the whole county. The County Committee are charged with the distribution of the benefits of the schemes in accordance with their view of the needs and claims of the several districts of their county. It is thus not impossible that a comparatively well-to-do district in such a county may derive greater advantage than a similar district elsewhere. We think this question deserves, and, we understand is receiving the consideration of the Department and the Local Authorities. Some alteration of the County Schemes appears desirable, whereby the full benefit of the increase of the contribution from the Endowment Fund, intended for the benefit of the congested areas, should be secured to those for whom it was intended. An alternative would seem to be to abandon the special increase of the contribution from the Endowment Fund and, if necessary, to apply the money thus saved to the Supplemental Schemes.

Recommendation.

239. If, as the evidence seems to establish, the Supplemental Schemes above described are necessary, for the present at all events, in the Congested Districts, it seems that some additional funds over and above the £2,000 contribution must be provided if they are to be efficiently worked. At the same time, it is to be hoped that assistance of this kind will not always be necessary. But until a general improvement has been effected in these districts, special assistance from public funds seems inevitable. We think that in respect of the expenditure in these districts where the agricultural work was taken over by the Department—an expenditure which, it must be remembered, was not contemplated or provided for by the Act of 1899, which expressly forbade the application of any part of the Endowment Fund in the Congested Areas—the Department is entitled to obtain from some source or other an addition to its income of not less than £10,000 per annum.

For the reasons discussed in paragraph 133, we think that the extent of any provision made for such purposes should be open to reconsideration from time to time in the light of experience.

Cost of Supple-
mental Schemes.
1895

240. Mr. Gill, in his evidence at the close of the Inquiry, estimated that the additional amounts which the Department would require for Supplemental Schemes generally, if similar treatment is to be applied both to congested districts and to other districts equally poor but not technically congested, would be £30,000. We have no materials which would justify us in reporting that the need for an expenditure of that amount ought to be regarded as sufficiently established to justify us in recommending it. The amount required could be determined only after investigation of the needs of individual districts. We are, therefore, unable to recommend at present the addition of any larger sum than the £10,000 above mentioned as in respect of the congested districts.

Cost of County
Schemes.

241. Mr. Gill also estimates that an annual sum of £50,000 will be required in respect of the necessary development of the County Schemes. Here again we feel a difficulty in forming an opinion on the estimate; we think that for the present the better form of making the necessary additions to the Department's resources is by relieving the Endowment Fund of charges now thrown upon it, which should be borne by the Votes.

Financial changes
recommended.

242. We estimate that the annual expenditure charged against the Endowment Fund would be relieved of about £21,000 if effect were given to the

suggestion in paragraphs 232-6, namely, that the entire cost of the administrative, inspecting and inquiry Staffs of the Department and of the Staff of the College of Science should be placed upon the Annual Parliamentary Vote, and that a moiety of the Department's contribution in respect of the salaries of teachers engaged in technical and agricultural education not otherwise assisted through the Vote, be paid to the Department from the Vote. By this arrangement the Endowment Fund, a fixed amount, would be relieved of charges which may be found to require considerable additions arising from increased appreciation of the value of education, and which it would be in accordance with accepted policy to defray in part by annual grants from the Exchequer. Relief of this kind would enable the Department to deal more effectively with the varying calls arising in the other interests which it has to foster.

243. Such questions as whether or not there should be an increased number of agricultural stations, and how far this system should be carried, are still awaiting the results to be derived from the working of the present stations, which is, to some extent, admittedly experimental. In our opinion, the success of these stations is such as to make it probable that other permanent institutions of this type will be established, and, if so, a considerable increase of funds from some source will be required. But this, again, must be left for further experience. A similar observation would apply to the development of the County Schemes and to other items of expenditure. We do not feel justified under present circumstances in making immediate recommendations of a more extensive character than those already indicated.

Further expenditure on Agricultural Stations.

See paragraph 226.

244. In the section of our Report dealing with Forestry we have drawn attention to the fact that afforestation involves so large questions, and would necessitate so great an initial expenditure, as to be quite beyond the resources of the Department. We recognise that the need and advantages of general afforestation have been fully established by the Departmental Committee on Forestry, and we trust that the planting and other forestry work now being done may soon determine such questions of detail as remain for settlement before action can be initiated on a scale commensurate with the problem.

Forestry.

Paragraphs 142, 143.

245. An account of the funds applicable to Fisheries, and the various heads and amounts of expenditure will be found in detail in the Tables set out in Appendix No. XXV. These Tables comprise the expenditure both upon Sea and Inland Fisheries. It has already been pointed out that for the purposes of Sea Fisheries there is available £10,000 per annum appropriated out of the Endowment Fund by Section 16 (d), and £20,000 invested in Consols, and transferred to the Department from the Sea and Coast Fisheries Fund. Both Sea and Inland Fisheries may receive grants from the surplus of the Endowment Fund under Sub-section 16 (g), Sea Fisheries being expressly named in the Sub-section, and Inland Fisheries being expressly included in the expression "other rural industries"; the Parliamentary Vote, to defray the administration expenses of the Fisheries Board of the Department, is common to both Sea and Inland Fisheries.

Fisheries.

There appears, however, to be one financial advantage possessed by Inland Fisheries which is not shared by Sea Fisheries. Sections 5 and 6 (3) of the Act of 1899 place the cost of research and experiments, and other matters, upon the votes in the case of Inland, but not in the case of Sea Fisheries. We are not aware of any instance in which advantage has been taken of this power for the benefit of Inland Fisheries. The distinction seems unnecessary and inconvenient, and we think that Sea Fisheries should be placed in the same position as Inland Fisheries in respect of the privileges conferred by Section 5.

It will be seen from the account at the end of Appendix XXV. that on March 31, 1906, the accumulations, investments, and outstanding loans amounted to £38,361. Of this sum, however, £27,621 stands to the credit of the Sea and Coast Fisheries Loan Fund.

246. The account set out in Table II. refers to the expenditure on Sea Fisheries of the £10,000 per annum secured to the Department as above-mentioned. The principal items of expenditure in that Table are—(1) The maintenance of the SS. *Helga*, (2) Marine Works.

The "Helga."

3720.

Mr. Green, the Chief Fishery Inspector, told us that the endowment of £10,000 was granted to enable the Department to provide protection, instead of having the services of a vessel of the Royal Navy for the purpose. However that may be, the original cost—construction and equipment of the *Helga*—amounted to £11,875, and was charged upon the Endowment Fund, as appears from Table III.

Marine Works

17925

247. On this Fund are charged also the expenses for Marine Works, Piers, Harbours, and Landing Places necessary for the fishing trade. These have amounted, it will be seen, in the six years, 1900-1906, to £14,952, to which should be added £2,073 engineering expenses. The places where this expenditure was incurred are stated in Table IV. Mr. Gill told us that a survey and preparations had been made for further works costing about £20,000. He thought there was not sufficient balance of the Fund to proceed with them. He considered that for these purposes a capital sum of £20,000 and an additional endowment of £10,000 per annum ought to be provided. No estimate of sufficient exactness was laid before us which would justify us in adopting this recommendation.

Oyster Culture

248. Amongst other items of expenditure mentioned in Table II. are, Oyster Culture in which, in the last four years, £2,980 has been spent; scientific equipment of the *Helga* and scientific investigations, on which, in the last two years, £746 has been spent. It has been pointed out above that if section 5 were amended, as suggested, an application for assistance from the Votes might be made to the Treasury for these purposes. The expenditure on Instructors in fishery and in net-mending classes has been very small, amounting only to £282. This was dealt with by Mr. Green in his evidence referred to in paragraph 156.

Paragraph 162.

Further funds appear to us to be required for Marine Works, though, as we have already said, we have not sufficient materials for estimating even approximately the amount which is needed. Such works are, however, essential to the successful development of the fishery trade. It is also most important that adequate funds should be raised for the prosecution of scientific investigation. The practical importance of such investigations is well illustrated by the newly discovered resources, which may turn out of great importance as to the wealth of the deep seas off the South-West Coast of Ireland and elsewhere.

17928.

Mr. Gill also asks, generally, for an annual sum of £5,000 for Sea Fisheries for general purposes above mentioned, and also for a similar sum for Inland Fisheries. As in other cases we do not feel justified in recommending the grant of these specific sums. A case appears to us to be made out for placing on the votes the salaries of the necessary staff, including the staff required for scientific investigations, on the lines suggested in reference to other branches of the staff of the Department. We think, however, that the proper time for considering the need of making further financial provision for Sea Fisheries will occur in connection with the question of the reconstruction of the administration of the Fishery Laws in Ireland, which will probably be ripe for consideration after the Report of the Royal Commission on Congestion. With regard to Inland Fisheries, we have stated in paragraph 162 our opinion as to the need for further protection. We think this is an object of sufficient public importance to deserve assistance from public funds.

Barrow Drainage.

249. We have now to deal with a special application in reference to a grant of £50,000 out of the Endowment under the following circumstances:—

In May last a memorandum was submitted to us, signed by the Members of Parliament for King's county, Queen's county, and Kildare, setting out the neglected state of the River Barrow and the evils to agriculture, to the health of the population, and to the crops and live stock of the flooded districts, arising from the saturation and periodic flooding of 45,000 acres of land in the river basin, and representing that a sum of £50,000 should be granted out of the unexpended balance of the Department's Endowment Fund to be "expended on such works and in such manner as would form part of any more extensive scheme that may be undertaken by Government in the future, and which would abate to some extent, the existing evil."

It was further suggested that the money, if granted, should be expended under a Drainage Board, consisting of members of the County Councils, through whose jurisdiction the river runs, that all plans, specifications, levels, and surveys in the possession of the Board of Works should be placed at the disposal of such Board, and that a short Act of Parliament, if necessary, should be promoted by Government creating such a Board.

In support of the representations contained in this memorandum oral evidence was given by the Marquis of Drogheda, through a large part of whose property near Monasterivan the river flows, by Mr. William Fitzmaurice, land agent of large experience, and by Messrs. Patrick Meehan and William Delany, Members of Parliament for Queen's county.

These witnesses gave an account of the deplorable condition of the river basin, with its vast area of agricultural land either permanently saturated or liable to floods which swept the crops, whilst the dwellings of farmers and of the labourers and others in several towns were periodically inundated to the great injury of the public health of the inhabitants and of the live-stock of the district. It was pointed out that the remedy was far beyond the reach of private enterprise, and should be undertaken by the State, which had acknowledged its responsibility in the matter, in that the Government of the day had, in 1889, brought in a Bill by which it was proposed to make a free grant of £215,000 and a loan of £145,000 to remedy the evil; but that as the Government could at present hold out no hope of aid from the Treasury for this purpose, it had been suggested that a grant or loan should be sought from the Department's accumulated funds, and it was claimed that such an expenditure would be authorised by the Act, and would be a proper application, being for the benefit of agriculture throughout a large area. No application had, however, been made to the Department on the subject.

The state of things disclosed in the evidence, and borne out by the Reports of the Royal and Vice-Royal Commissions to which we were referred, appears to call for a speedy remedy, but the question seems to us to affect wider interests than those which are entrusted to the special care of the Department. Assuming, however, that the funds of the Department could legally be devoted in the manner suggested, the proposed application would be a matter for the consideration of the Department and the Agricultural Board, whose duty it would be to consider whether, having regard to the condition of the Endowment Fund and the claims upon it, it would be proper to make so large an appropriation as is desired. At all events it lies out of our province to make any recommendation in the matter.

VIII.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS, SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

Under the preceding heads of this Report we have dealt fully with the matters referred to us as regards the duties and relations of the Department and the financial conditions under which it has to conduct its operations. We propose now briefly to summarise our views upon the main questions put to us. These are whether (1) the provisions of the Act of 1899, as regards the constitution of the Department, and (2) the methods which the Department has followed in carrying out the Act have been shown by experience to be well suited to the conditions of Ireland, and whether any, and if so, what changes are desirable in those provisions and methods.

250. Some witnesses have expressed an opinion that in place of the Department of Agriculture and other Industries, and Technical Instruction for Ireland, a Board should be constituted either wholly or partly elective.

We are not in favour of this suggestion. We think that continuity of policy and efficiency of administration is best secured by the responsibility being vested solely in the head of the Department, the subordinate officials in their turn being responsible to the head of the Department. We see nothing in the experience of the working of the Department which leads us to think that its functions would have been more efficiently discharged if it had been under the management of a Board wholly or partly elected or entirely nominated. We do not recommend any change in Section 1, Sub-section (1) of the Act of 1899.

12152-51.
12153-208.
12225-49.
12250-61.

The Department
McGlyn, 7185-7274.
Sweetman, 14358.
Downes, 2179-27.
O'Ryan, 18227.

251. A question of the first importance which we are bound under the terms of the Order of Reference to consider, is as to the working of the provisions of the Act with regard to the office of Vice-President contained in Sub-sections 2 and 3 of Section 1, and to report whether, in our opinion, they require change. The circumstances under which the Vice-President had no seat in Parliament after the General Election of 1900, and, notwithstanding that fact, at the request of the Government then in office and their successors, retained his post, have been already stated. There is, however, better opportunity now than there was at the time when the provisions of the Act were under the consideration of Parliament, for forming an opinion as to how far it is necessary or desirable that the Vice-President should have a seat in Parliament.

The question, in effect, is whether we ought to recommend the repeal of Sub-section 3. This repeal would render the Vice-President incapable of sitting in Parliament.

In our opinion experience has shown that the proper place for the Vice-President of the Department is in Ireland rather than at Westminster. The relations of the Department with the Agricultural Board, the Board of Technical Instruction, and the Council of Agriculture seem to us to require that the Vice-President of the Department should be in a position to devote his whole time to maintaining that familiar personal association with the work in all its branches which is essential if he is to enjoy the confidence of the Council and Boards. He has to direct the policy of the Department in Ireland, and this is, in our opinion, quite incompatible with due attendance in Parliament.

On the other hand, the fact that an important part of the money spent through the Department—a part which will increase as the work it represents increases in volume and efficiency—is on the annual Parliamentary Votes, makes it necessary that the Department should be represented in Parliament by a member of the Government possessed of the necessary information and responsibility.

What seems essential is that in order that the Parliamentary Chief of the Department may be in a position to represent it adequately, he should be sufficiently informed as to its activities to give effective support to the interests entrusted to him. To this end he should be in closer touch with it than appears to have been the case in recent years.

The Minister responsible to Parliament for the large and varied field of education in Ireland has under his control organisations which must frequently raise questions that would be difficult for anyone without ministerial authority to determine; and it must not be forgotten that in the administration of funds voted by Parliament, is to be found the most direct means available for securing that the work of the several Boards dealing with education may make for the development of a harmonious educational system which would pervade the country.

On the whole it seems to us that while it is necessary that the Department should be represented in Parliament it is neither necessary nor desirable that it should be represented by the Vice-President.

If the Vice-President is not in Parliament, what should be his position?

Under the actual working of the constitution set up by the Act of 1899 the Vice-President is not, and in our opinion ought not to be, a permanent and pensionable Civil servant. He is rather in the position of an official charged with the administration in Ireland of the Act of 1899. Having regard to the power of veto possessed by the Agricultural Board and the Board of Technical Instruction, and the relation of the Council of Agriculture with both of these Boards, it is not inaccurate to say that the Vice-President is responsible to these bodies, for it is in their power to make his position untenable. A permanent Civil servant on the other hand, has no responsibility except to the head of his Department.

Another important consideration is that, in our opinion, it is essential that the office of Vice-President should be, as far as possible, independent of party politics. We greatly doubt whether Mr. Gerald Balfour's conception of a Minister of the Crown sitting in Parliament being also the working head of the Department, would have been found to work satisfactorily.

We have found in the course of our investigations that as far as relates to the actual working of the county schemes, there is an almost complete

absence of friction arising from political or religious differences. Nationalists, Unionists, Catholic Bishops, Parish Priests, Church of Ireland and Presbyterian Clergy constantly work together on the local Committees. Nor has it been suggested to us by any witness that the appointments of the Department have been in any degree influenced by religious or political considerations. So far the idea of the Recess Committee's report appears to have been largely realised, and we attribute these results in some measure to the fact that Sub-Section 3 of the Act has been practically inoperative.

We recommend that Sub-Section 3 of the Act of 1899 should be repealed, and that the office of Vice-President should be tenable for the period of five years with power of re-appointment. Recommendation.

252. We have already fully dealt with the constitution, functions, and powers of the Council of Agriculture and the Agricultural Board. We have pointed out that the objections which have been urged to the provisions of the Act in reference to this matter appear to us to be based more upon the inconsistencies of those provisions with the political ideals of the objectors than upon any actual defect in the working of those bodies. We have already stated our opinion as to the reasons why both upon the Council of Agriculture and upon the Agricultural Board a nominated element appears essential. We are of opinion that as regards the constitution of the Council of Agriculture and the Agricultural Board there should be no change in the proportion of members appointed by County and Provincial Councils and those appointed by the Department. Council of Agriculture and the Agricultural Board.
Paragraphs 18, 19, 20-2.
Paragraphs 34, 35.

Many witnesses have advocated some extension of the powers of the Council of Agriculture.* At present it will be remembered that the Council has no powers at all, except the appointing through its Provincial Councils of two-thirds of the members of the Agricultural Board. It is otherwise a purely deliberative body. An instance has been given in the Report of an important question being referred by the Agricultural Board to the Council of Agriculture, and the Bishop of Ross would like to see an extension of this practice. Paragraph 29 (3).
2087-01. No suggestion has been made to us which we feel justified in adopting for any alternative provision giving increased powers to the Council of Agriculture. Purely deliberative or advisory bodies for similar purposes exist, as is shown in the report of the Recess Committee, in various Continental countries. Although the Council of Agriculture meets only twice a year, and sits usually for not more than two days, we are satisfied that it adequately fulfils the function of bringing home to the Department the special views and requirements of different parts of Ireland and of giving expression to the opinions held in the country upon questions of practice and policy. We do not think it practicable to define for purposes of legislation the limits of any powers which it might be suggested would be right to give to the Council of enforcing its resolutions.

We have shown in the course of this Report various instances in which the views of the Council have materially influenced the action of the Central Authority. In the long run, any real or permanent divergence of views as to the policy of the Department must be checked by the fact that the Council, through the Provincial Committees, elects two-thirds of the Agricultural Board, and that the Board has a veto on the expenditure of the Endowment Fund. Any further check appears to us to be impracticable, and we do not think any necessity for it has been demonstrated.

253. The absence of all statutory powers of initiation in the case of the Agricultural Board has also been made the subject of much criticism.† On this point we refer to the evidence of the Bishop of Ross, quoted in paragraph 30. It will have been observed in the course of this Report that the practice of the Agricultural Board has been to consider proposals with reference to the expenditure of the Endowment Fund. Its duty is to criticise and control. Indirectly this involves, as the Bishop of Ross points out, power of initiation. As the working of the Department increases a check Agricultural Council and Board, powers of.
3022-02.
2055.

* Bishop of Ross, 3086-90; Mooney, 11618; Butler, 11361; Toal, 10116; Delany, 12362; Downes, 3211-51; Cogan, 11765; Hore, 10714; Galvin, 4270; Kennedy, 3974-84.

† Mooney, 11618-9; Corbett, 4291-316; O'Ryan, 14337; Downes, 3198-206; Egan, 11001-13; Hore, 10714-23; Butler, 11335-41; Cury, 12849-79; Dowling, Rev. P.J., 15554-91.

upon the imprudent use of its resources becomes of increasing importance. We think it would be unwise to turn the Board by a change in the Act from a body whose first duty is the control of expenditure into a body authorised to initiate expenditure. We therefore do not recommend any change in the Act of 1899 with regard to the powers and functions of the Agricultural Board or the Council of Agriculture.

Publication of Proceedings.

254. An opinion has been expressed by many witnesses that it is desirable that more publicity should be given to the proceedings of the Agricultural Board.* These, and the minutes in which they are recorded, are regarded as confidential. For obvious reasons it is impossible that the proceedings of the Board should be open to the public in the same way as the proceedings of the Council of Agriculture. The Board has to deal with money questions, such as the purchase of land and other business matters, which must necessarily, while they are under consideration, be of a confidential character. The practice has been adopted of communicating to the Press a short account of the meetings of the Board and the nature of the business transacted. It is desirable that these reports should be as full as is consistent with the requirements of the business transacted by the Board. It might perhaps also be well if the Board presented the Council at its half-yearly meetings reports of the business done in the previous half-years.

Finckh, 1749-51.

Adams, 2943-52.

McDonald, 4371-4.

Board of Technical Instruction.

255. The Board of Technical Instruction consists of 21 members. Of these 3 are appointed by the County Borough Council of Dublin; 3 by that of Belfast; 4 appointed, one by each of the other county boroughs; 1 by the Urban Councils of the County of Dublin; 4 appointed, one by each Provincial Committee; 1 by the Commissioners of National Education; 1 by the Intermediate Education Board, and 4 by the Department.

The Board advises the Department with respect to all matters and questions submitted to it by the Department in connection with technical instruction. The allocation of the sum of £55,000 for technical instruction as between the County Boroughs and other parts of the country is subject to its concurrence; and it exercises a veto on the application of the portion of the Endowment Fund applied to technical instruction elsewhere than in the County Boroughs. So far as concerns the work outside the County Boroughs the Board of Technical Instruction thus occupies the same position as to technical instruction that the Agricultural Board holds as to Agriculture. In relation to the work in the County Boroughs, its functions are restricted to those of advice on questions submitted and to representing the interests of the County Boroughs in the primary division of the £55,000 above referred to. It has been urged before us that in view of this difference it is anomalous that the four Provinces should be represented on the Board by but four members, while the County Boroughs have ten.

Dolan, Rev. J., 1207-31.
Humphreys, Rev. J., 12306.
Macarlin, 12374-6.
Toal, 10129-30.

Recommendation.

In this view we concur, and we recommend that the number of members appointed by the Councils of Dublin and Belfast should be reduced to two each, and that each Province should appoint two members instead of one as at present. The members would thus be appointed:—8 by the four Provinces, 8 by the six County Boroughs, 1 by the Urban Districts in the County of Dublin, 1 by the Commissioners of National Education, 1 by the Intermediate Education Board, and 4 by the Department—23 in all. We recommend that the Act of 1899 should be amended accordingly. We also recommend the amendment of the Act with regard to the removal of the prohibition to teach the practice of a trade, dealt with in paragraph 206, and also that Section 5 should be amended so as to refer to Sea as well as Inland Fisheries for the reasons given in paragraph 245.

Consultative Committee.

256. For the purpose of co-ordinating educational administration the Act (Sect. 23) established a Consultative Committee of five members: the Vice-President of the Department, as Chairman, and one member appointed by each of the following four Bodies:—the Commissioners of National Education, the Intermediate Education Board, the Agricultural Board, and the Board of Technical Instruction. We have received evidence that the Committee has

* Connolly, 11315-7; Corbett, 4267-89; Toal, 10078-82; Hanlon, 11347.

done much useful work. It has dealt with such matters as the grading of schools; scholarship arrangements in schools of different grades; the incorporation of the Department's Scheme for Experimental Science, Drawing, Domestic Economy, and Manual Training, in the curriculum for Secondary Schools and matters connected with the teaching of the same subjects in National Schools. The formal discussion of such questions in a small Committee must necessarily be of advantage where that Committee includes representatives of different Boards, each controlling a section of educational work; but Dr. Starkie thinks it is very probable that as much progress would have been made by personal conferences between responsible officers, although there had been no such Committee. The Rev. Father Finlay, who represents the Intermediate Education Board on the Committee, says, that by its constitution the Committee

"comes very much under the exclusive control of the Department. The result is that the other bodies—the Board of Intermediate Education and the National Education Board—do not regard themselves as identified with it in the same way as the Department does. They are led to look upon it as a branch of another Department. I think if it stood a little more apart from the Department, and acted a little more on its own initiative, its effect would be more far-reaching and its work more useful."

He recognises, however, that notwithstanding the preponderance of the Department in the Committee, it has had definite and valuable influence. He says:—

"The Board of National Education, in consequence of the resolutions of the Consultative Committee, made every effort to carry out the suggestions of the Committee. Friendly relations were also established between the Intermediate Board and the Department; the Science programme in Secondary Schools was a matter of agreement between the two bodies; and that matter, too, was amicably arranged and all friction avoided, and the teaching of Science proceeded satisfactorily."

The Consultative Committee, however, at best does little more than afford an opportunity for bringing to the test of discussion matters upon which one Board or another has formed definite opinions. Its resolutions carry much moral weight, and we have no reason to doubt that their importance is fully realised by the members of all the Boards sending representatives to the meetings. Something more effective is required, however, to further the action—legislative and financial as well as administrative—necessary to secure a congruous system of education. Dr. Starkie believes that there will never be proper co-ordination in Ireland until there is one educational authority. On this view we are not in a position to express an opinion; but we recognise that under existing conditions the Consultative Committee would be more likely to carry the whole-hearted support of the different Education Boards if each were represented upon it by the same number of members, and if the Chairman were the Minister who represented each Board in Parliament.

257. For the reasons stated in paragraphs 206, 245, and 230, respectively, we recommend (1) an amendment of Section 30 of the Act of 1899 as regards the prohibition of teaching the practice of a trade; (2) an amendment of Section 5 by placing Sea fisheries in the same position as Inland fisheries in respect of aid from voted moneys; and (3) that the question of obtaining further statutory powers for the collection of agricultural and trade statistics be dealt with. Other suggestions made in the Report need not be referred to here.

258. We have now to reply to the second question put to us in the Reference—whether the methods which the Department has followed in carrying out the provisions of the Act of 1899 have been shown by experience to be well suited to the conditions of Ireland, and whether any, and what changes, are desirable in these methods. As regards Agriculture and other Rural Industries, the principal effort of the Department has been to organise and carry out the system of agricultural education which we have described. It seems to us futile at the present day seriously to question the utility of

GGI, 596-617.
Finlay, Rev. T. A.,
3533-41.
Starkie, Dr.,
2877-2912.

2877.

2878

2879.

2879.

Other
Recommendations.

Suitability of the
Methods followed
by Department.

agricultural education on lines now generally understood and adopted, or the benefits which, under suitable conditions, may be looked for from the improved methods which a system at once scientific and practical introduces. The main question is whether the special methods adopted by the Department are well suited to the conditions prevailing among the people of Ireland. We think the evidence we have received from all parts of the country, when duly weighed, compels us to answer in the affirmative. We believe the Department has been successful in stimulating throughout Ireland a sense that in various directions improved conditions of agriculture are within reach of the farmer, and a desire to take advantage of the methods by which that improvement may be, in some measure, obtained. In this work the Department has been aided, as we have shown in the memorandum attached to this Report, by the cordial co-operation of the Local Authorities throughout Ireland with very few exceptions. The difficulties have been great. Besides the difficulty attending in every country the introduction of new ideas and the overcoming of old ideas and prejudices, there have been others peculiar to Ireland. The backward state of primary education, the distrust of any movement savouring at all of Government initiative or control, and, we must add, strange misconceptions of the motives and objects of the Department have been serious obstacles in the way of progress. On the other hand, the Department has had on its side the characteristic intelligence and quickness of the Irish people. It is too early, after the lapse of little more than six years since the commencement of the movement, to attempt to tabulate the results of improvement in practical agricultural knowledge. We can only refer to the evidence we have summarised, and state the conclusions we have drawn. We desire to express our conviction that the system adopted of training Irish itinerant instructors and the instruction given by them, both of a theoretical and practical character, has been attended with marked success. The zeal of almost every County Committee for instruction of this kind seems to us convincing evidence in favour of this conclusion. How far or how soon this system can be partly or wholly superseded by the establishment of winter classes or by the more expensive type of agricultural stations and farms is a problem which is in process of solution. We think the experiment of agricultural stations should be proceeded with on the lines indicated in the evidence of Professor Campbell.

See Paragraphs 45-9,
261.

In the portion of this Report dealing with Technical Instruction we have dealt at length with the various types of instruction which the Department has aimed at promoting, and we have there stated our opinion as to the measure of effectiveness which has attended the efforts it has made or fostered. In several grades of education and in relation to many of the industrial interests which may most readily be furthered by educational influences, the Department has initiated or has adopted methods calculated to increase the commercial or industrial efficiency of the individual. It has also established Schools and Classes which aim at introducing the advantages of special manual and mental training into the preparation of youths for particular occupations. Some such agencies are already tried and proved, and are steadily making way as the numbers whom they affect increase, and as those whom they train reach the stage of showing to employers their readiness in acquiring facility in their work. Other schemes are still under trial, and extension of these will depend on their success.

The field for technical instruction is wide and varied, but a great part of it has already been occupied by the operations under the Department, and there is even now adequate proof that the methods employed have been well adapted to the varying conditions which have to be met. We have pointed out that the circumstances of the problem which faced the Department made it necessary that the needs of those who had already passed beyond school years should be dealt with at once in a special way, while the permanent policy for technical education should include attention to the technical aspect of all grades of education, elementary, secondary, and higher. Even yet, however, it is only in the most favourably placed centres of population that the organisation for technical instruction begins to be complete and definite,

and in some sections of the field of work—sections, too, that affect a numerically large part of the community—the earliest service that can be rendered by education of a practical trend does not lie within the domain of the Department.

We believe that the work of technical instruction is now being carried on in Ireland on lines well adapted to meet both the temporary and the permanent necessities of the country in the matters for which the Act made the Department responsible. The ultimate tangible and financial results of successful technical education are valuable and lasting, but they cannot be produced in a few years. Much remains to be done in the development of this aspect of education in Ireland, but the keen appreciation of the advantages derived from what has already been accomplished, and the pervading interest in the subject, promise that the labours of the Department, and of the local Authorities who share responsibility with the Department, will produce results of permanent benefit to the country.

259. We shall be doing less than justice if we do not place on record our estimate of the value of the assistance rendered, in carrying out the policy and work of the Department, by its staff. In visiting different parts of Ireland we have been greatly struck by the testimony which has been given to us, and, by what has come under our own observation, of the very satisfactory relations between the Local Authorities and the officials of the Department. Charges of dictation and unnecessary interference have in some cases been made, but, as far as our experience goes, these charges, when examined, have not been substantiated, and are insignificant when compared with the amount and weight of the evidence of an opposite character. That the assistance and co-operation of the officers of the Department is sought after and followed by the great majority of Local Authorities there is, in our opinion, ample proof. We think that, in point of zeal devotion to duty practical good sense and ability, the staff of the Department, so far as we have had an opportunity of forming a judgment, is entitled to a high place in the records of the Civil Service.

Staff of
Department.

Our colleague, Mr. Micks, prefers to state his views in a separate form.

We have to express our obligations to our Secretary, Mr. J. J. Taylor, C.B., I.S.O., for the valuable assistance he has rendered to us throughout this laborious Inquiry.

We have the honour to be,

Your Excellency's obedient Servants,

KENELM E. DIGBY,

JOHN DRYDEN.

F. G. OGILVIE,

STEPHEN J. BROWN.

(Subject to Memorandum attached hereto.)

JOHN J. TAYLOR,

Secretary.

May 30, 1907.

MEMORANDUM BY MR. S. J. BROWN.

I have signed the Report subject to the following observations as to paragraphs numbered 235 with reference to the "Technical Instruction Grant" usually referred to in Ireland as the "Equivalent Grant."

Bishop of Waterford,
16951, 16455-57.
Rev. A. Murphy,
16460-68.
Messrs. McGlynn,
7354-6.
Messrs. 13546-59.
O'Doherty, 7603-79.

My inability to agree with the majority of my colleagues as to these paragraphs is due to the inference which might be drawn from them that the claim put forward by so many witnesses that the "Grant in aid of Technical Instruction" should have been continued after the passing of the Agricultural and Technical Instruction Ireland Act, 1899, is founded on any misunderstanding or misapprehension of the facts.

16951.

The claim of Ireland in this respect is clearly stated by the Bishop of Waterford to whose evidence I refer. In my view that claim remains unanswered. It rests not alone upon the statements made in the House when the Bill was before it, nor upon the Official Circular to Local Authorities issued by the Department afterwards, but upon the language of the Act itself. That language appears to me to be consistent only with what was understood to be its meaning when the Bill was under discussion in the House of Commons, and with the interpretation given to it by the Department after it had become law, viz. : that the Grant in aid of Technical Instruction, the administration of which was transferred to the Department, was to continue as before with the sole alteration that it was to be administered by the Department instead of by the Board of Education, South Kensington.

In my view the curtailment of this grant at first, and its total withdrawal after two or three years, constitute a legitimate grievance, nor can I see that there is any compensation in the replacement of the aid given through the Parliamentary Vote by a charge on the Ireland Development Grant—a purely Irish fund.

As to the future it is impossible yet to say how far the grants in aid which may be earned by Technical Committees under the Department's new programme will compensate for the withdrawal of the Equivalent Grant, but I think a full and fair trial should be given to this system.

As regards the past, however, I am of opinion that the amount which would have come to Ireland for Technical Instruction under the Parliamentary Vote, if effect had been given to the understanding on which the Act was passed, should be estimated and put upon the vote, that the Ireland Development Grant should be recouped the £7,000 per annum that has been taken from it, and that the residue should be applied for purposes of Technical Instruction.

STEPHEN J. BROWN.

May 15, 1907.

MEMORANDUM ON THE WORKING OF THE COUNTY SCHEMES (AGRICULTURAL) IN EACH OF THE COUNTIES OF IRELAND.

In the Report we have endeavoured to describe the principal methods adopted in carrying out the plan of the Act of 1899 for the advancement of agriculture by the joint action of the Department and the local authorities under the various schemes we have discussed. We now attempt to summarise briefly the evidence which has been laid before us as to the general relations between the Department and the local authorities, and the success or failure of the system of joint action.

We have in the Report referred in some detail to the working of the schemes in particular counties. In this Memorandum we propose to take a more general survey of the whole country. In connection with this Memorandum reference should be made to the tables set out in the Appendix giving the figures of the live stock schemes, and of the allocation of the joint fund to agricultural purposes in all the different counties of Ireland. The principal materials for this survey consist of the evidence of the representative witnesses of the various local authorities who have been called before us, and the latest reports of the various committees of agriculture to their respective county councils with which we have been furnished.

Appendix VIII. X.
XI, XXIII, XXIV.

Munster.

Beginning with the counties constituting the Province of Munster the latest report of the committee of agriculture and technical instruction for the county of Clare is dated April 10, 1905. This report shows that at that time there were in the county two instructresses in domestic economy, one manual instructor, one poultry instructress, and one butter-making instructress. Those appear to have given much satisfaction. The committee report favourably on the working of the horse scheme, and as to the poultry scheme, of which they give detailed information. It will be remembered that in 1904 the Department adopted the rule that an instructor should not be a person already resident in the county. Some friction arose on that ground between the Department and the committee, and in consequence the poultry scheme remained in abeyance during the year 1904. An instructress was, however, appointed for 1905, and the scheme seems to have worked satisfactorily. Mr. Mescal, a representative from the county on the Council of Agriculture, speaks favourably of the work of the instructors. The Department was somewhat severely criticised by some of the witnesses for not having achieved greater results, and there is a strong demand for an agricultural station in the county after the model of Clonakilty or Athlery. There is a demand for more instructors, and for a further development of the system of experimental plots, and of prize schemes. The need of further and more rapid progress is the dominant note of the evidence from Clare.

Mescal, 5201.

Fisher-Hume, 5276,
5281-97

McDonnell, 5267
Mescal, 5288

The Cork county committee of agriculture publish a useful volume containing their financial accounts, the live stock, and agricultural schemes adopted for 1906-7, and including copies of the leaflets issued by the Department up to October, 1906. In this county there are two agricultural instructors, two teachers of classes, two instructresses in poultry-keeping, two in butter-making, and one instructor in horticulture. A very favourable account of the working of the various schemes throughout the county is given by Mr. Roberts, the representative of the committee, and of the general improvement observed throughout the county. He states that although some initial difficulties occurred at first, the committee and the central authority have worked well together. Detailed information is given as to the working of the schemes in the West Riding of this county by Mr. Redd, one of the agricultural instructors. Mr. McDonald, the chairman of the county council, agrees that the schemes are working well, but thinks they are costing too much.

4484, 222

4544.

13399.

4467-78

Kerry.

Appendix XXIV.

4493.

Limerick.

Lord Emly, 6455.

4631.

5783.

5703-90.

Appendix XXXIII.

5991.

The last annual report of the committee of agriculture of county Kerry for the year ending March, 1906, contains an account of the working of the horse-breeding scheme, with a recommendation that sires should be selected with more bone, and not so much of the thoroughbred type. As regards the cattle scheme the committee are of opinion that no bulls should be awarded premiums previous to purchase. It will be seen on reference to the table in the Appendix that in this county, in 1905-6, all the nominations for mares were taken up, and 22 out of 29 premiums for bulls. Under the boar scheme 8 premiums were taken up in the first year of its operation, and 4 in the second year. The agricultural scheme was not put in force as the committee were unable to secure the services of a sufficiently qualified instructor; a want which has since been remedied. Some question arose between the committee and the Department upon the resignation, from ill health, of the poultry instructress. The committee proposed to unite the duties of the poultry and dairy instructresses, but the Department considered that it was necessary for so large a county as Kerry to have the full and undivided attention of an expert specially trained in poultry management. The committee acquiesced in this view, and continued to appoint their instructresses. The only representative witness from Kerry who appeared before us, Canon O'Riordan, confined his evidence mainly to the subject of technical instruction. Speaking, however, from "general knowledge" he referred to the opportunities the farmers were getting "of improving their stock without any expense to themselves, and they think that is a very good thing." He deplored the want of an agricultural instructor. "Improvement is my motto, and we are only too anxious to co-operate, but we are pulled back all the time."

In county Limerick, unfortunately, there has been a good deal of friction. It appears to have arisen from a refusal by the Department to assent to a proposal of the Limerick committee to a modification of the cattle scheme so as to confine the services of the premium bulls to selected cows. This question has been referred to in paragraph 90 of the Report. In 1904 the Department appears to have considered the introduction of a provision in the scheme to this effect to be premature. An interesting discussion on the subject of selecting cows will be found in the examination of Lord Montagu by Mr. Dryden (5611-5613), where the objection that the principle of selecting cows has the effect of excluding the poor man's cow from the advantages of the well-bred bull is pointed out. It is pointed out in the passage of the Report above referred to that the great advantage to the improvement of the breed of cattle likely to result from the selection of cows as well as of bulls has long been recognised, and that the Department is now taking steps to endeavour to overcome the difficulties by which a scheme for this purpose is surrounded. Unfortunately, in this as in other cases, the zeal and impatience of the county committee hardly appear to have made sufficient allowance for the necessity laid upon the Department to discharge the onerous duties imposed upon it by gradual advances. Lord Emly and Mr. Patrick Vaughan, chairman of the Limerick county council, complained of the refusal of the Department to adopt in 1904 the plan suggested by Limerick for improving the milking qualities of the cows. Mr. Vaughan, while admitting the great importance of educating farmers with regard to seeds and manures, disbelieves altogether in itinerant instruction, and desires instead the establishment of experimental farms. He attaches the greatest importance to winter dairying, and complains that the Department has done but little to advance it. Mr. Vaughan would, instead of adopting the Department's methods of itinerant instruction, establish a number of experimental farms, one in every rural district, of 40 or 50 acres each, where winter dairying could be taught. Mr. Vaughan did not, however, develop this scheme of experimental farms or explain how it could be carried out with the resources at the command of the Department. Limerick has not, until the current year, had an agricultural instructor, and at the date of the return set out in the Appendix was still without an instructor in butter-making or poultry-keeping. The scheme, therefore, of agricultural education adopted by the Department elsewhere throughout Ireland has had no adequate trial in the county of Limerick. The farmers of Limerick are, in the opinion of Mr. McDonnell, President of the Chamber of Commerce, better qualified to give instruction in home

dairying than to receive it. There was also, unfortunately, some friction with the Department with regard to the disallowance of an appointment of an instructress in poultry, who was not thought to satisfy the required standard. Limerick, too, appears to have resented the introduction of the rule with regard to residents in the county. This has been referred to in the Report.

Lord Montagu,
5618.

Rev. W. Casey, 5157.
Paragraph 72

The horse-breeding scheme appears hitherto to have had the greatest amount of success in Limerick. From the table set out in the Appendix XXIV., it will be seen that the nominations of mares provided (200) were all taken up; that of the 40 bull premiums provided only 25 were taken up, and that of the 8 premiums to boars only 3 were taken up, in the first year of the operation of the scheme.

Monsignor Hallinan, one of the witnesses appointed by the county committee of agriculture and technical instruction to give evidence before us, sent a letter containing his views which is set out in Appendix LVI. His observations refer principally to technical instruction and to the promotion of industries. He states, however, that he sees "no improvement in our system of agriculture here in Limerick."

It seems, therefore, that, with the exception of the horse-breeding scheme, the county of Limerick has to a large extent remained outside the influence of the Department, so far as regards agriculture. This seems to us a matter for deep regret. There appears to be no county in Ireland where improvement both in the extent and methods of tillage is more needed. This is the first condition of the great desideratum of the county, an improved system of winter dairying. It is to be hoped, now that the difficulties as to the cattle scheme appear to have been practically overcome, and the committee have appointed an agricultural instructor, that the methods which have been found to work well in other parts of the country may be adopted by the local authority of the county of Limerick.

The North Tipperary committee of agriculture, in its annual report **North Tipperary.** for the year 1905-6, states:—

"We are glad to be able to state that the interest of the public in the working of the various schemes is steadily increasing, and the various lectures and classes of our instructors through the county have been well attended during the past year.

"The intelligent application of improved methods of farming in North Tipperary is evidenced by the greatly increased tendency to use up-to-date implements; the early and more skilful tilling of the lands; the judicious application of artificial and natural fertilizers; the skill and care shown in the selection of the various seeds, and in the increased area under sown crops, particularly barley, in the North Riding."

The report describes the horse-breeding scheme as "an unqualified success." The bull scheme, however, is "not availed of to anything like a full extent." "We find a difficulty in getting a sufficient number of applications for bull premiums." It appears, however, from the table set out in Appendix No. XXIV. that out of 19 premiums provided 16 were taken up.

The following passage in the report is also worth quoting:—

"A peculiar feature of this scheme for cattle improvement is that by far the greater proportion of premium bulls goes to the tillage districts, while the great dairying and cattle-raising districts of Thurles and Nenagh have very few high class bulls for service. It is noticeable that the winners in the cattle classes of the county shew in Nenagh and Thurles come principally from the tillage districts."

This bears on the difficult question referred to in our Report on the **Paragraphs 90, 91.** effect of the dairying industry upon the breed of cattle.

The following passage also illustrates the great appreciation to which we have already referred of veterinary lectures:—

"A most important feature of the work carried on during the year was the series of highly instructive and deeply interesting lectures on Veterinary Hygiene and First Aid in the diseases of horses and cattle delivered by Professor Mason, M.R.C.V.S., under the auspices of the Department, and free of cost to the committee. These lectures evoked an interest amounting to enthusiasm, and we trust that Professor Mason's services will be again at our disposal next season."

The report contains the reports of the inspectors, and elaborate accounts, with tables showing cost and results of various experiments in barley-growing, manuring of meadows, of oats, of potatoes, and of mangolds; on the varieties of potatoes and the saving of potato seed. There is also a balance sheet of receipts and expenditure. In the letter in reply to the circular addressed to the committee set out in the Appendix LXV., various suggestions are made with regard to extension of experiments and demonstrations, co-operation, agricultural banks and other matters.

South Tipperary.Appendix XXIV,
XXVII.

There is no report published by the committee of the South Riding of the county. It appears from the tables set out in the Appendix that the live stock schemes, excepting the boar scheme, which has not been adopted, are in full operation, all the nominations for mares and premiums for bulls having been taken up, and that the services of an agricultural, a horticultural instructor, and a poultry instructress are employed. As in North Tipperary, the South Riding raises the full penny rate.

Co. Waterford.

The fifth annual report of the committee of agriculture of the county of Waterford for the year ending September 30, 1906, states "that owing to shortness of funds, or rather the energetic action of your committee in carrying out the approved schemes of the county, they could not, as they had hoped, provide for agricultural classes for which the Department had an instructor ready," and they mention certain reductions they had been obliged to make. They propose that a rate of 1d. in the pound should be struck exclusively for agricultural and live stock purposes, instead of the $\frac{1}{2}$ d., the portion of the rate of 1d. which has hitherto been applied to those purposes, and the estimates for the current year were framed on this basis. The report contains full accounts of the working of the various schemes. According to the evidence of the witnesses from Waterford the horse-breeding scheme appears to have been the most successful. The cattle and swine schemes have not been largely taken up.

Danzky, 10022.

10060.

10070.

The relations between the Department and the county committee have always been cordial. Mr. Boyle, secretary of the committee, states that the butter-making scheme is most popular and that they strongly advocate the provision of school gardens under the management of the county horticultural instructor. Both in the cattle and horse breeding schemes special provision is made for farmers below a certain valuation. The following observations in the report upon itinerant instruction generally are pertinent to this inquiry:—

"Your Committee are of opinion that whilst Lectures are of use both in rousing attention and reviving fading knowledge they will fail in effecting permanent good unless followed by solid academic and continuous practical instruction in the field.

"They would, therefore, much favour the establishment of Agricultural Plots of 2 or 3 acres close to National Schools, which should be cultivated by boys in the higher standards under instruction of the County Agriculturist; and that an Agricultural Station should be secured for the County into which would be drafted, after leaving school, boys intended for farming; and adults from 18 or 19 years and upwards."

The reply of the Waterford committee to our circular letter will be found in the Appendix LXV. They desire to record their satisfaction as to the cordial relations existing between them and the Department from their inception, and the reasonable manner in which the committee's suggestions have been at all times dealt with.

*Connought.***Co. Galway.**

In their fifth annual report for the year 1905-6, the committee of the council of county Galway state that all the schemes above referred to are in operation in the county, that the interest in the schemes is increasing and that many parishes which previously did not avail themselves of the services of the committee's lecturers, have done so in the last year. They acknowledge the assistance they have received from the clergy, school teachers, and local representative men, "to which the successful working is due." The committee are again able to report a continuance of that steady increase in their operations which has been maintained from the beginning, and refer to a table in the appendix to their report containing figures which appear to maintain this statement. Amongst other items the mares entered at shows rose from 120 in 1901 to 262 in 1906, the premiums to boars from 10 to 28; the egg stations from 5 in 1903 to 29 in 1906, the pure-bred eggs distributed from 3,600 to 229,539. The report adds—

"The Committee have now, however, extended their work as far as their resources will allow, and, unless further funds are forthcoming, it cannot be expected that future reports will continue to show similar increases. There is a large field for the work which your Council have entrusted to the Committee, but there is not sufficient money to do all that is required. With the staff at their command it will take a considerable time to reach every district of this very large county. There are nearly 400 schools in the county at which lectures might with advantage be given. It is the earnest desire of the Committee to reach every one of these centres."

Mr. Fogarty, secretary of the county committee, complains of the Department for not allowing the committee a sufficiently free hand. Three cases were referred to in support of this general allegation:—(1.) That the Department disregarded an objection expressed by the committee to the system of determining the selection of the bulls for premiums before purchase; (2.) that the Department did not include in the horse-breeding scheme a proposal of the committee to introduce a system of annual bonuses for young mares to encourage farmers to keep such mares for breeding purposes; (3.) that the Department did not adopt a proposal to establish an annual congress of county committees to discuss matters of common interest. We hardly think these instances justify the charge of undue interference.

Mr. Burke, member of the county council, and of the committee, refers to the great attraction and benefit of the lectures of Professor Mason on veterinary hygiene, and of Mr. Dewar on the uses of manures.

Mr. Hynes, member of committee, thinks that the establishment of the Agricultural Station at Athenry, and of the school at Mountbellow supersede the need for itinerant instruction. "The exhibit from the farm at the last Show in Athenry was a treat; there were six or seven varieties of potatoes, six or seven varieties of oats with the quantity per acre of grain and straw, samples of hay grown with the different manures applied, and samples without any manure; in fact everything that a farmer could want information on was explained by a competent man, and I would simply consider it a waste of money to have itinerant teachers." Taken as a whole, and including the evidence quoted in our Report with regard to the poultry and boar schemes, the evidence as regards the progress of the work in this county is certainly encouraging. A large portion of the county is included in the congested area. Galway and Mayo have a poultry instructress in common.

The agricultural committee of the county of Leitrim have not published any report, but very full evidence was given to us, some of which has been already quoted, by the Rev. J. Meehan, Catholic Clergyman, who seems to have taken a most energetic part in promoting the work of the advancement of agriculture in the county. Speaking of his own parish, he says that the Department has done "a vast amount of good," and that this applies to the remainder of the county. He is of opinion that the work has been "altogether on the right lines." He attributes the success of the Department in great measure to the work previously done by the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, who have almost entirely got over the "religious difficulty." The main work of the Department has been "educative, and that is work that does not appear on the surface, and whose results will not appear for a very long time." But the Department "has taken the greatest possible trouble to give the proper stamp to education." He goes on to speak of the pioneer lectures on various subjects, of which he thought so highly that he "took the trouble to put those lectures together in a little book," which he handed in to the Committee. He expresses great disappointment that the lectures were not followed up by the appointment of an agricultural instructor. Application was made for one in 1903, but the committee were unable to obtain one.

We have spoken of the great difficulty which has been experienced by the Department in turning out a sufficient number of trained men who can be recommended as instructors to the county authorities. Happily Leitrim has, since Father Meehan gave evidence, been able to appoint an instructor. Father Meehan presses the claims of Leitrim to have an agricultural College, and he bases this on the argument that it is especially necessary where the soil is as poor as it is in Leitrim, otherwise people would be trained to farming under conditions which do not apply to such a county as Leitrim. On the vexed question of premiums for bulls, he inclines to think the present practice increases unduly the price of the bull, and is in favour of restricting the use of inferior bulls. He speaks of the great value of the veterinary lectures. He is also strongly in favour of restricting the number of the committees. The Leitrim committee consists of 76 persons. After an emphatic expression of opinion that "if the country is to be saved, which is questionable, it is by agriculture," Father Meehan concluded his

remarkable evidence in words which, though not altogether complimentary to ourselves, are not without point and appropriateness:—

1909-10

"I cannot see the object or motive of this inquiry; it seems to me a little ungracious to have it at all. . . . We have an expression in Ireland that the best hurlers are always on the ditch; here you have experts coming in. As far as we understand, the object of the Commission is to try and improve the Department of Agriculture, and show where it has been making mistakes. But in its own internal constitution there is power to improve and amend and so on, and from my knowledge of the Department, I believe that it is perfectly ready at all times to recognise any mistakes it has made, and benefit by them. It must have been through a good deal of experimenting in the first few years of its existence. When a Department is experimenting, it is easy for a man who comes along afterwards to criticise in the light of the experience accumulated by it."

1910.

Mr. Keane, another member of the committee, gave evidence on many points affecting the county substantially in accordance with that given by Father Meehan. The services of the poultry instructress for this county are shared with Roscommon and Sligo.

Mayo.

The county of Mayo comprises a large area of "Congested" Districts. In the year terminating September 30, 1906, the committee employed an instructor in horticulture and three instructors in butter-making. In the current year they have also the services of an agricultural instructor and of a poultry instructress. In their report (issued in the present year) the committee say:—

"The committee are glad to be in a position to state that a substantial improvement has taken place in many respects, and that the people in the county, while not yet as much alive to the advantages of a better agricultural education as we would wish them to be, are showing a greater interest in the work of the Committee. The entries, in many instances, have increased on those of former years, and the application received for premium bulls and boars, poultry stations, &c., were far in excess of the number that the Committee were in a position to allocate. This is a pleasant change on your Committee's first experience of the working of the Department's schemes in the county at a time when it was impossible to fill up all the premiums offered under the county scheme."

As regards the horse-breeding scheme, they report that 180 nominations for mares were offered in 1906 for farmers whose valuation did not exceed £30. Two-thirds of them were to go to farmers under £15 valuation. After the nominations were taken up, 22 bulls were placed in the county under the cattle breeding scheme, being 1 more than in the previous year. In addition, the Department placed 12 hulls in the congested districts of the county under a supplemental scheme. It is recorded that 23 premium boars were located in the county as against 18 in 1905. Eight additional boars were placed by the Department in the congested districts.

"There is no scheme of the Committee more applicable to the poor districts than this, as all the small farmers rear a large number of pigs, and it is a matter of much importance that the quality of the animals would be kept up to a good standard."

The observations of the committee upon the butter-making in a county containing so large a proportion of poor land and of consequent poverty are worth quoting in extenso.

"During 1905-06 season, provision was made for an additional instructress in butter-making as the Committee considered that the practical lessons given in this subject were of much importance to the people. A fair amount of butter is produced in the county, and exported by the traders in the different towns; but the quality of the greater part of it is very poor. Although in many parts of the county the quality of the land are not suitable to the production of a first-class article, it may be safely stated that in nearly every case a better price could be realised if the people kept the cream under proper conditions, and if they had a thorough knowledge of the many points to be observed in the production of a good article. The Committee have received from districts where the classes have been properly attended and an intelligent interest shown in the work, very satisfactory reports as to the benefits derived from the classes; and they believe that when no good results have followed it is not by any means attributable to any defect in the system of teaching, but is due to the feeling of apathy and carelessness—in a few cases due to the result of a feeling that they are above being educated—which has often prevented the efforts of the Committee to make any substantial headway."

With regard to horticulture, the committee report the establishment of demonstration plots in various parts of the county for the growing of fruit and vegetables. As in many other parts of Ireland, the object aimed at seems to be rather an improvement in the dietary of the country people than any more extended commercial enterprise. "There does not exist any reason why a nice cottage-garden should not be attached to every small farmer's place."

Professor Mason's lectures were very much appreciated by the farmers, and the report concludes with an acknowledgment of the courteous manner in which the Inspector of the Department has discharged his duties, and for the desire he has shown to make the work run as smoothly as possible.

The report we have referred to appears to represent the latest view of the committee of agriculture. Another report, prepared in reply to our circular letter, was put in evidence by Mr. Carolan, the secretary of the committee, which contains a good deal of general criticism of the value of the work of the Department. A somewhat different and more hopeful note is struck in the concluding paragraph.

"We are glad to be able to state that, on the whole, our relations with the Department have considerably improved, and are continuing to improve: so that there will be less likelihood of friction in the future. We have to say that our people are inclined to expect too much from a new Department. Allowances must be made for experiments and mistakes in all new undertakings. Rome was not built in a day. The technical and agricultural training of a nation cannot be expected to be accomplished in a few years. The keystone of all reform is a fair trial and a little patience. We have no reason to fear that, with the adoption of the many improvements which will be suggested to your Commission, and with the more cordial feeling of co-operation which is being manifested between the committee and the Department, a great amount of good for the agricultural and industrial development of Ireland can be accomplished in the future. However, we are of opinion that a greater and more lasting good will accrue when the Department and the other boards of this country are placed under the control of a representative national assembly."

Having quoted freely from the reports, we need only refer to the interesting evidence of Mr. Carolan, the county secretary, and of Mr. Melvin, member of the county committee and county council. Mr. Melvin cultivates flax, and says that one year with another it is a paying crop. Mr. Clarke, formerly secretary of the committee, and now of the county council, and Mr. Higgins, a member of the county council, are disposed to be critical of the action of the Department in several respects. The points urged will be found in the paper by Mr. Clarke set out in the Appendix LXV. The statements in this paper were dealt with in the course of Mr. Clarke's examination. Mr. Larminie, an experienced but not a representative witness, considers that the methods of the Department are generally on the right lines.

The report of the Roscommon committee before us is that for 1904-5. The committee say that in the winter of that year they were fortunate in securing the services, through the Department, of an instructor in agriculture, whose duties are described, and whose instruction is stated to have been "practical and much appreciated, especially when he was brought into contact with the actual work of the farm." The experiments which he conducted are described. They excited much interest. On his leaving the service of the committee, they were able to appoint a successor, who was at the date of the report lecturing and selecting plots for next year's experiments, for which he finds a widespread demand amongst the farmers.

The committee express the opinion that the itinerant system of instruction, which was intended "mainly to create a desire in the youth for a more extensive knowledge of up-to-date practical farming," had done its work. They hope now to enable the instructor to hold classes concurrently in "say two neighbouring towns" throughout the winter for young farmers or boys intending to become farmers, and in other seasons to attend to experimental plots.

With regard to fruit and vegetable growing, the committee report that instruction in the growing of fruit, early potatoes, and other vegetables has continued with good results. The instructor finds an immense interest in the public mind this year in those branches of the great farming industry. The report goes on to describe in considerable detail the nature and subjects of instruction, referring especially to the growing of early potatoes in boxes, and to the desirability of greater appreciation of a variety of vegetable diet, to which the teaching of the committee's instructresses in domestic economy contribute. The committee deal with the need of improvement in the appearance of the dwellings of the poor, and the appreciation of flowers and better surroundings. This, it is hoped, will to some extent be effected by the cottage prize scheme. After dealing with forestry and poultry-raising the committee describe the method adopted by the instructress in butter-making,

and dwell on its importance. Purchasers have declared that butter produced by the pupils fetches twopence a pound more than that sold by them before attending the class. Instruction is given also in the profitable preservation of butter for sale in winter, when much higher prices are obtainable. With regard to the live stock schemes, the committee report that the high price of bulls prevents the farmers from taking up all the premiums offered, but points out that the Department keep certain bulls at Athenry for sale at cost price. The horse-breeding scheme works well. All the nominations of horses are taken up. The swine scheme, with the facilities afforded by the Department as regards the purchase-money explained in the Report, appears to be working well, and to give much satisfaction.

The evidence of Mr. Galvin, chairman of the committee of agriculture, and Mr. Neary, a member of the committee, is much to the same effect. Both speak favourably of the bull scheme, except that there are not enough bulls to meet the requirements of the county. There is a visible improvement in the cattle where the scheme operates. The poultry instructress as already stated is shared with Leitrim and Sligo.

The committee for the county of Sligo have adopted all the schemes, and, according to Mr. Keane, the secretary of the committee, they are working very satisfactorily and the farmers take great interest in them. In this county the Department appears in 1904 to have recommended the discontinuance of the employment of the agricultural instructor, who had been in the service of the committee since 1901. It recommended the substitution of winter classes, and sent down an instructor for the purpose. No difference arose between the committee and the Department on this ground. Mr. Keane states that the committee and the Department always got on harmoniously. The committee publish the schemes and accounts annually, but appear not to make a formal report. According to the latest return the county has now an agricultural instructor, a poultry instructress, whose services are shared with Roscommon and Leitrim, and an instructress in butter-making and in horticulture.

Ulster.

The counties of which the province of Ulster consists present wider differences in point of race, religion, and political opinions than are to be found on a similar scale anywhere else in Ireland. But, so far as our Inquiry has gone, these differences appear to have been kept altogether out of sight. They have not, so far as we have observed, operated in any way to prevent the cordial co-operation of the people of the various counties in carrying out a work which has for its object the benefiting of the whole country.

A letter, signed by the chairman and secretary of the county committee, giving an account of the present condition of their work in agriculture, dated May 11, 1906, was laid before us and will be found in the Minutes of Evidence. After describing the various schemes in operation, the letter proceeds—

"All these schemes are working admirably, and the prosperity of the county is being largely increased thereby. The cost for the present year will amount to about £3,690, more than half of which is provided by the Department and the remainder by the County Council from the rates, which have only been increased by the very modest amount of ¼d. in £. While much remains to be done, for example, in assistance of sea fisheries, encouraging fruit-growing, and in other directions, we have every confidence that the Department will lend a willing ear to our fair demands in the future as in the past, and we trust that no change will be made in the constitution of the Department that will in any way hinder the beneficial work so well begun."

Evidence to the same effect was given by Mr. McCance, member of the Antrim county council and of the Royal Ulster Agricultural Society. He speaks of the efforts made, with the sanction of the Department, hitherto not attended with any great results, to revive a well-known and useful breed of ponies in the Glens of Antrim, known as the Cushendall ponies. Mr. McCance also gives his view that the time has come when itinerant instruction, which he considers a great success, might usefully be followed up by the establishment of small agricultural stations, where young men could receive more practical training and more lengthened courses of instruction than is possible at present. These views appear to be largely shared by many experienced agriculturists in the North of Ireland.

The evidence of Mr. McConnell and Mr. Turtle, members of the Antrim county council, and of Mr. McClure, a farmer, and Mr. Coey, a representative of the Royal Ulster Agricultural Society, strongly confirm the report above quoted.

The report of the county committee of agriculture and technical instruction for 1904-5 is also before us. It gives full details of the working of the schemes up to the date of the report. Fair progress is reported in the winter classes held at Ballymena for the sons of farmers. This was the second year of the establishment of this class. The courses, one of six weeks before Christmas, and one of six weeks afterwards, were felt to be too short.

The horticultural instructor for the county reports that there was great need in the county for more knowledge of fruit growing and its advantages. He states that great interest was being felt in the subject, and that there was a considerable demand for the information. The working of the poultry and Swine schemes for this county is dealt with in paragraphs 97 and 102 of our Report.

The report of the committee of agriculture and technical instruction for the county of Armagh is a very elaborate document, and deals fully with all the schemes in operation in the county.

Armagh.

As regards the horse-breeding scheme, Armagh is one of the counties which favours the use of half-bred stallions and anticipated an improvement in the working of the scheme from the Department having made the concession of including such stallions in the register. The cattle-breeding scheme is described as most popular and appears to be working in a thoroughly satisfactory manner.

A great improvement in the number of entries in the second year of the operation of the scheme of prizes for small farms and cottages is recorded. This is attributed to raising the valuation of the agricultural holdings qualifying for competition from £10 to £20. In 1907 the qualification is to be further raised to £25. "This scheme was initiated solely for the benefit of the small farmer and cottager, and it is hoped that they may yet be induced to take such interest in it as may lead to the brightening of many a homestead in the county."

Full particulars are given as to agricultural experiments conducted in the county. A graphic account of the methods and results of the experiments on soils and artificial manures is given in the memorandum by Mr. J. Redmond and set out in the Appendix LVII. Agricultural work in all its branches seems to be in progress throughout the county with great vigour and promise, and very general satisfaction is felt at the energetic action of the county committees. This view is generally expressed in the evidence of the witnesses called before us—Mr. Huston, secretary of the committee, Mr. Murphy and Mr. McClure, members of committee, and Mr. Lockhart, a farmer residing in the county.

The committee of the Cavan county council have not been in the habit of issuing a report. Interesting evidence was given by representative witnesses. Mr. McQuaid, representing the committee, told us that he thinks that when the live stock scheme was first introduced into the county about two-thirds of the population were in favour of it, and one-third against it. "Some thought it came to assist the landlords. Others said it would increase the rent when the judicial term expired. That died away by all the estates in the county Cavan nearly being sold, and people became the owners of their own land." Mr. McQuaid differs from the view of the Department as to the ticketing of premium bulls before sale, and, as often happens, is disposed to complain of the Department declining to change its practice. He recommends that a representative of the county should be associated with the inspector of the Department in the selection of premium bulls, and would admit to premiums Longford or Roscommon cattle. He complains of the small number of premium bulls, and thinks they do not benefit the poorer parts as much as would be possible if they were more numerous and not limited to the particular high-class breeds. He also has some criticisms on the horse-breeding scheme, and would like to have double the number of nominations and half the present fee for service.

Cavan.

As regards the instruction in agriculture, Mr. M'Quaid tells us that it has been a marked success. "The people, everyone has taken to it." He thinks very highly of the methods employed by the agricultural instructors. He believes "the people of the county have laboured a third more this year than they have for the last fifteen years." He speaks of the improved crops. "I think the whole cause of it was the few pounds that were set aside for experimental plots."

General Clifford, also a member of the county committee, strongly confirms Mr. M'Quaid's evidence as to the value and results of the agricultural instruction.

Speaking of the lectures of Professor Mason, he says that at one of the first which he attended there was an attendance of 10. Three years afterwards the attendance was crowded, and there were a number of young farmers with notebooks taking notes. General Clifford wants the Department to employ a shorthand writer, and to circulate copies of these lectures.

He greatly deplores the loss of the agricultural instructor—"he is mourned all over the county"—who has been promoted in the service of the Department, and it will be seen from the return in the Appendix that the county has not yet been able to find a qualified instructor to supply his place. General Clifford also agrees with Mr. M'Quaid on the much controverted question of the policy of ticketing the premium bulls before the sale, and an interesting discussion on this point will be found in his examination. The witnesses' views as to the working of the boar and poultry schemes have already been referred to.

Mr. A. S. Lough, member of the Council of Agriculture and Agricultural Board and of the county committee, in the course of his important evidence made some useful observations and criticisms upon the work of the Department in the county. Speaking of the new station at Ballyhaise, he says:—

"I think it will be a very useful thing in the county and a great assistance to the Department in carrying on their schemes. The intention is not only to educate young men, but it will be useful if it becomes a distributing station for good stock of various sorts, and also there might ultimately be established a dairy herd there, where records of milk ought to be kept. It is a very necessary thing in this country, as I consider the small farmers in Ireland don't understand the necessity for watching the milk yields, and they don't pay much attention to it. Referring to the schemes in the county, the details are contained in the pamphlet prepared by the County Secretary, and very good results are shown where we have local organisations that are able to assist the instructors and instructresses who give the six weeks' courses of lectures, and one of the most important points is that we should try and get local committees and local organisations established by the Department. Too much work is thrown on the County Secretary, and the educational work the Department could do here is very great. It has not been done as fully as it should be, and especially with reference to the technical branch of their work, when teachers go into a district for a six weeks' course, unless there is an active local committee it is unsatisfactory, but less with regard to such instruction as poultry-keeping and horticulture and bee-keeping, because you only want occasional visits. There is not the slightest doubt that the result of the Department's work in the County Cavan has been very useful in giving the small farmers a good idea of the advantages of using artificial manures to a much larger extent than they ever did before. I believe it to be a fair estimate to say that there are a hundred bags of artificial manure used now for one used twenty years ago."

"12382. (Mr. Dryden).—Can you say anything about the result of using that manure?—It has been very satisfactory, and I have not the slightest doubt it has increased the wealth producing capacity of the district considerably; we had a very useful agricultural instructor, a sensible, level-headed man. It used to be a common thing in Cavan town for the sweepings from hay lofts to be sold as grass seeds to poor people; years ago that was quite common. Now no such thing would be thought of. Where farmers used to buy light grass seeds they now buy the heaviest they can get."

We have referred in the Report to the unfortunate friction which has taken place in the county of Donegal, which has resulted in the county hitherto not having the benefit of any instructors in agriculture or the kindred subjects. It is, however, satisfactory to find that, notwithstanding this drawback, the secretary of the county committee, Mr. E. H. O'Doherty, is able to report that for the last two years the live stock scheme, the cottage and flower prize scheme, the subsidies to shows scheme, and the flax scheme have been in operation.

With regard to the first of these, he states that it is admitted that since the live stock schemes came into operation a very great improvement has been effected in the quality of live stock in the county, especially in the

breeds of horses and cattle. Similar evidence is given by Mr. McArthur, 777a.
member of the committee. Mr. Weir, a farmer living at Lifford, expresses
his disagreement with the evidence of Mr. Cassidy, a member of the com- 843a.
mittee, who proposed that the live stock schemes should be framed and ad- 847a-25.
ministered by district committees, that bulls should be procured by these
committees, and that the Department should be under an obligation to
register the animal so purchased. Mr. Weir would not alter the present
system of selecting premium bulls, and is not in favour of half-bred bulls. 8411.

The report of the committee of agriculture for county Down for 1906 8411. Down.
sets out the various schemes for the county. All the schemes appear in this
county to be vigorously worked, including the flax scheme. For this scheme
a special sub-committee is appointed by the county committee, consisting of
six persons, each of whom must be an experienced scutcher or grower of flax,
but all payments have to be authorised by the county committee. Special
interest attaches to the paragraphs relating to the winter school at Down-
patrick. It is stated that owing to the success attending the school in 1904-5,
it has been determined to hold another session in the winter of 1905-6. The
classes are confined to sons of agricultural farmers and labourers in the county
of Down, above 16, who are actually engaged in full work. No fee is charged
for attendance, but an entrance examination must be passed. A limited
number of scholarships of £12 each are offered to enable young men who
cannot travel daily to the school to reside in Downpatrick—subject to the
condition of satisfactory attendance and progress. The lecturers are the
agricultural instructor and a veterinary lecturer. The report contains
information as to the nature and results of the various experiments conducted
in the county under the agricultural instructor and the reports of the
several instructors.

This county has the benefit of a fund called the "Henry Trust" Fund the 913a.
history of which was given us by Mr. McConnell. The objects of the trust
are somewhat similar to those of the scheme of the Munster Institution.
The fund bequeathed by Mr. Henry accumulated for fifty years, and in 1899
a scheme for its administration was formed. The trustees have acquired 52
acres of land, and are anxious to establish with the aid of the Department a
small model farm of the type of Clonskilly or Athenry, but on a much smaller
scale. Nothing, however, has yet been finally determined on, and in the
meantime the trustees are contributing £250 per annum towards the Down-
patrick winter school. This contribution affords very material assistance in
promoting agricultural education in the county.

The letter of the committee of May 19, 1906, in answer to the circular 8411. Appendix LXV.
addressed to local authorities, is to the same effect. It also suggests that the
time has now come when the Department should provide an agricultural farm
and school in each county for the training of young men in practical agricul-
ture.

Other demands for increased pecuniary aid are made by some of the 922a.
witnesses. Mr. Dickson, a member of the committee, hopes that the Depart-
ment will have funds at its disposal to give the committee a great many
more premium bulls. Colonel Sharman-Crawford would have the Depart-
ment establish experimental farms in different parts of the county with the 906a.
view of proving that good farming pays. In considering proposals of this
nature it must be borne in mind that the rate raised by the county is
only 1d. in the pound. Appendix XXV.

Col. Sharman Crawford, the chairman of the county council, speaking 902a.
from a large experience, tells us that there has been "a tremendous change in
the character especially of the animals reared in the country." At Shrews-
bury, where a large quantity of Irish store cattle are sold, "the stock-buyers
have told me that since the Department's work the value of Irish stores has
considerably advanced." "There is ocular demonstration that the 934a.
man who employs a premium bull or uses some of the schemes is getting
more money."

No report is issued by the committee of county Fermanagh. The 822a. Fermanagh.
working of the schemes is said by Mr. Archdale and the Rev. J. Hall, members
of the committee, and Mr. West, secretary, to be very satisfactory, and the
relations between the committee and the Department of a smooth and cordial 822a.
823a.
827a.

character. There has been no friction. Mr. Archdale has a few criticisms to make. He says the premium bulls "have done a tremendous lot of good, more especially to the small farmers," but that in the poorer districts of the county there are not enough farmers who will take premium bulls, and he is in favour of good half-bred bulls being selected by the Department for use in these districts. Mr. Hall, who has considerable practical experience, does not agree on this point. He would adhere to pure-breeds, using *Kerries* or *Galloways* in mountain districts. Mr. Hall, too, is emphatically in favour of the system of selecting premium bulls before purchasing, but would like the premiums increased. Mr. Hall is not quite satisfied with the boar scheme, and wishes a sheep scheme tried again. The reply of the Fermanagh committee of agriculture to our circular letter is to the same effect as Mr. West's evidence.

Mr. Archdale states that nothing has done so much good in Fermanagh as prizes for cottages and gardens. He would like the Department to add prizes for draining. "Nearly all Fermanagh is bought by the tenants, and I think the men ought to get prizes for laying the drains properly."

The report for 1906 of the committee of agriculture and technical instruction for the county of Londonderry for 1906 sets out the schemes of instruction in agriculture, poultry keeping, subsidies to shows, and flax growing. To the live stock schemes a prefatory note is prefixed, as in several other counties, calling attention to the intention to take measures to improve dairy cattle by the selection and registration of dairy cows. The horse, cattle and swine schemes are set out in full, and a short statement is given of their working. The committee regret the loss of their agricultural instructor on his promotion, but since the issue of the report another instructor has been appointed. The only other instructor on the agricultural side now at work in the county is the poultry instructor.

In October, 1905, it is stated the Department offered the services of Professor Mason on veterinary hygiene for ten lectures. These were much appreciated and, generally speaking, well attended. Ten pioneer lectures on horticulture were delivered by Mr. Orr, sent down by the Department in April, 1905. Following up the pioneer lectures a further series of ten practical lectures were delivered in the month of October. The lecturer reported that, with one exception, the pioneer lectures were poorly attended, but that there was a much better attendance at the practical lectures.

The report concludes with an account of experiments and demonstrations carried out by the agricultural instructor upon the growing of oats, manuring and sprouting of potatoes; and upon the varieties of potatoes, manuring of hay, testing of seeds, analysis of cattle foods, and purchase and use of artificial manures. This report appears to be a good specimen of the working of the system in the earlier stages of its development.

The evidence of the representative witnesses carry on the story of progress for another year. Mr. Hamilton, the chairman of the special committee appointed to draw up an answer to the circular letter issued by us, read the report of the committee, in which they

"Desire to place on record our high appreciation of the important work in which the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland has been engaged since its constitution under the Agricultural and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Act, 1899, and the manner in which the Department has endeavoured to carry out the provisions of that Act. We approve of the Department as at present constituted, and consider that any material change in its constitution would be disastrous to the cause of agriculture in Ireland, and therefore inadvisable."

They consider that the time has come when more power might be given to county committees in the matter of drawing up and carrying out county schemes. They consider that the Department—

"Should, in drawing up such schemes, be assisted by an advisory committee, nominated by the county committees in such districts or provinces in order that the conditions prevailing in each portion of such district or province may be properly understood and provided for."

They also suggest that the contributions of the Department should bear a somewhat larger proportion to the amount raised by rate in the county than it does at present. There appears to have been some difference of opinion in

the county council on the question of the adoption of this report. The adoption was carried by 14 to 8 votes. Mr. Hamilton incidentally made an interesting reference to an agricultural College established by the North West Agricultural Association at Templemoyle, near Derry, in 1826. This Association "largely anticipated the work of the Department," and did "a great and useful work until about 1847," when, owing to the Famine, it became embarrassed, and handed over its funds and its work to the Board of National Education. "Under them it began gradually to decline, and collapsed some time in the early sixties." 7899.
7596
7595.

Some criticisms upon the working of the flax schemes in this county were made by Mr. Warneck and Mr. Stewart. These have been already referred to. Attention is called to the reply of the county council to our circular letter set out in Appendix LXV. The committee of agriculture and technical instruction approves of the Department "as at present constituted and consider that any material change in its constitution would be disastrous to the cause of agriculture in Ireland, and therefore inadvisable." 7895.
Paragraph 166.
7536.

There seems to be some difference of opinion in county Monaghan with regard to the working of the Department. The answer to the circular letter addressed by us to the county committee contains complaints of what they regard as too rigid an adherence to fixed rules by the officials of the Department and of the methods in which the qualifying examinations of candidates for positions under the county committees are conducted. They also complain of the slowness of the Department in adopting special schemes put forward by them for the improvement of dairy cattle. The report for 1906-7, of the committee of agriculture, which apparently is written from a different standpoint, deals freely with the opposition to county schemes. They find it necessary

Monaghan.
Appendix L.IV.

"To draw the attention of those inhabitants of this county who are either indifferent or hostile to the working of the Agricultural and Technical Instruction Act, to the great advantage obtainable by our people from the adoption and proper working of our schemes."

"Those who work on the county committees have often experienced the injury done to the beneficial work sought to be effected for our people by this constant condemnation of the Department and of the working of the Act."

"A large majority of the ratepayers of our county are well satisfied with the carrying out of the several schemes, and there are comparatively few who have not benefited directly or indirectly by them."

After referring to the objection to the 1d. rate, the committee proceed to point out that the holdings of the large majority of the county Monaghan farmers were valued at sums under £20 each. The rate, therefore, does not exceed 20d., generally much less, and there "is not a farmer who could not make as many shillings, by taking the advantages held out to him by the smallest of these schemes, while many of those who are industrious and enterprising have made considerable sums of money by the benefits thus conferred on our rural population."

The following observations deserve quotation :—

"There are two other charges strongly pressed against our movement—first, that it does not benefit the poor man; and, second, that the money spent in instructing our people would be better spent in starting industries."

"In reply to the first, we refer to our schemes for a complete answer. A casual perusal of them will show at once how careful our Committee has been to place every advantage obtainable from the schemes within the reach of all. Our officials have acted up to the same spirit, for in all the lectures and demonstrations the greatest care has been taken that nothing will be recommended which cannot be availed of by the poorest amongst us. Special care is given by our agriculturist, horticulturist, and poultry instructors to the facilities of the small farmers for following their advice. The large and wealthy farmers have been excluded from the benefits of the live stock schemes. The technical instruction schemes, as well as the farm and flax price schemes, have been so framed that by far the greatest benefits and advantages are availed of by the small farmers, tradesmen, and labourers. Our agricultural and home industrial shows stand on the same footing, for, notwithstanding that the largest portion of the funds with which these shows are carried on are subscribed by well-to-do people, the greatest care has been taken in drafting the schedules to prevent the rich or more prosperous members of the community from competing with the less wealthy. In fact, as far as this county is concerned, the whole tendency of the working of the Acts is to elevate and improve the peasantry, so that the first of the above-mentioned charges is wholly unsustainable."

As to the second, the report points out the danger and difficulty of attempting to create industries artificially :—

"The industries a country can rely on arise one out of the other and depend on each other."

With regard to agricultural classes the committee report that they have been abandoned as they "did not take very well," and the agricultural instructor has been directed to give more of his time to demonstrations and experiments, and that "he is to illustrate his lectures by demonstrations during the day in some field or garden near where he lectures in the evening." The work of the instructresses as regards poultry and butter are very favourably reported on.

The committee regret that very little progress has been made with bee-keeping in the mountainous districts. "Horticulture is of more interest to the Monaghan farmers." The report is hopeful as to increased production of fruit in the county, and calls attention to the cider and jam and fruit preserving factory at Portadown. Success is claimed for the cottage and farm prize scheme, shown by "the vast change for the better which has taken place in many of the farms throughout the country." Complaints are made as to the scarcity of registered stallions. The scheme for subsidies to shows has done much to rouse the interest of the people in their principal employment especially in farming. The committee refer with pride to the establishment of the Monaghan agricultural school "without any outside help," and think the "Department might be more generous in its treatment of it." It appears that it is desired to attach a farm to this school. The provision of demonstration farms by the Department jointly with the county council is advocated by Mr. Toal, representing the county council, and by Sir Nicholas Gosselin. Some of the witnesses criticise some of the arrangements of the Department as to the selection of premium bulls, and complaints were made by the Rev. E. McKenna, P.P., as to what he regarded as the arbitrary character of the conduct of the Department in certain particular cases detailed by him. Dr. Hall, member of the committee, sees "the greatest improvement in the people since the Department started."

It should be added that the report gratefully acknowledges the assistance which the work of the committee has received from the clergy and attributes principally to their influence the fact that the Act of 1899 has become so popular in Monaghan.

Mr. J. Daly, a representative of the county council and committee of agriculture, while admitting that the Department has done good, criticises it for its reluctance to recognise half-bred stallions and bulls, and for its refusal to assist in the supply of lime. He also objects to the rule prohibiting the employment of a native of the county as an instructor therein.

Mr. P. Whelan, a member of the same council and committee, while expressing himself perfectly satisfied that the adoption of technical and agricultural instruction has been a source of benefit to the people of Monaghan, thinks that more might have been done by the Department to assist the poorer districts of the county as regards the supply of lime, and to obtain from the Railway Company increased facilities for this purpose. He thinks that the instruction the people have received has been sufficient to teach them the value of the use and application of the proper manures, and that lectures might be superseded for a year or two, the money thus saved being devoted to the supply of lime.

The report of the committee of agriculture for county Tyrone for 1904-1905, which contains also the agricultural and live stock schemes in operation in the county during 1905-1906, shows the whole system in full work, with the exception of butter-making, for which there was no instructress. After submitting full reports as to the agricultural classes, lectures on flax cultivation, inspection of flax mills, lectures, demonstrations, and experiments in agriculture, horticulture, and bee-keeping, poultry, live stock, and other schemes, the committee

"In bringing their report to a close desire to record their conviction that the work of the year under review and that of preceding years is bearing fruit, and while all results cannot be tabulated, while indeed the most important results cannot be set forth in the convenient compass of a balance sheet, being represented as they are by a gradual dissemination of knowledge, an increase in receptivity to new ideas among the agricultural community, and

the adoption of new methods, nevertheless the progress in the directions indicated is real, and is in the opinion of the Committee, of primary importance. The teaching given to those attending the classes of instruction in technical agriculture has been of special value, and it is believed that the result of this training on younger farmers in the county will be far-reaching and permanent. An attempt has been made to ensure a continuation of interest among students of the classes by the formation of an agricultural students' association, and by giving facilities to students to carry out, on their own farms during the summer, experiments under the direction of the itinerant instructor of agriculture. The interest taken in the lectures of the itinerant instructors throughout the county has increased considerably, and the constant demand made for the assistance and advice of these officers is a satisfactory proof of the high quality of their work."

This estimate of the satisfactory character of the progress made by agriculture in the county was fully borne out by the witnesses who gave evidence before us. Mr. Montgomery, a member of the Council of Agriculture, Agricultural Board and county committee, thinks that the time has come when an agricultural college or station—at all events, a central station—should be established in the county, where experiments could be carried on under the direction of the agricultural instructor. The secretary of the committee, Mr. Dallinger, testifies that the relations between the committee and the Department have been, generally, most friendly, and that the suggestions of the committee have been on several occasions adopted by the Department and embodied in the schemes. Mr. Dallinger favours the idea of a model experimental farm rather than that of a residential college, and suggests that it might be transferred, after an interval, from one part of the county to another. Mr. Eaton, a member of the committee, agrees generally with Mr. Dallinger, especially as to the great benefits of the poultry scheme. He thinks, however, that some of the other schemes have not reached the poorer parts of the county, and that the experiments are too much confined to the good land. Mr. Stewart, also a member of the committee, agrees with the other witnesses as to the successful working of the various schemes, with the exception of the flax scheme. He does not consider flax-growing profitable at present prices, and thinks the money spent on the scheme might be used to more advantage. The general result of the evidence from Tyrone appears to be that very satisfactory progress has been made in the working of the Act of 1899, and that further progress may be hopefully looked for.

Leinster.

The Carlow committee have published no report. There are instructors in agriculture, poultry-keeping, and butter-making, and the live stock schemes are in operation. The premiums offered for bulls and the nominations for mares have been fully taken up. Mr. Hanlon, the representative of the committee of agriculture and member of the Agricultural Council, tells us that the live stock schemes "have been doing a great deal of good," and that "the good that they will effect will be greater perhaps in the future." He speaks very highly of the work of the instructress in butter and poultry, and also of the work of the agricultural instructor, both in his lectures and in following up the lectures by experiments with seeds and measures.

"I think he has created an interest in agriculture which there was not before, and set people thinking as to the best means of carrying out these things."

The committee of county Dublin do not issue a report. The letter of the secretary set out in the Appendix L.XV. contains many complaints of the conduct of the Department in particular matters. Some of these were found in the course of the evidence to rest on misconception of the Department's powers and duties. The evidence of Mr. O'Neill, referred to below, throws some light on the character of the friction which has unfortunately existed between the Department and the committee. Two of its members, Mr. James Walsh and Mr. Joseph Mooney, were deputed to give evidence before us. We much regret to say that Mr. Walsh died a few days before his evidence was to have been taken. This county is one of the two Irish counties which have no instructors in agriculture or the kindred subjects.

Mr. Patrick O'Neill gave evidence as chairman both of the committee and of the county council. Mr. O'Neill also appeared before us as a representative of the Agricultural Board, of which he is a member, representing the

2823-3.

2827-7.

2895-428.

2420.

2471.

2486.

2483.

Carlow.

11167

11152.

11203.

Dublin.

See Report, par. 215

Mooney, 11615.

province of Leinster. He is also a member of the Council of Agriculture. In those capacities Mr. O'Neill gave evidence of a general character bearing on our present subject.

On the relations between the Department and the county committees, he says:—

"I think I might say that in my opinion some of the friction which has taken place between these local committees and the Department might have been avoided by a less rigid application of the various schemes. I am free to confess the Department always were most anxious in the first instance to establish broad principles, but in the application of those principles differences of opinion from time to time arose which caused friction between the Department's officials and the county committees. They were in some degree inevitable, I suppose, and would have arisen, I think, necessarily in all new undertakings with which the people were not familiar, but at the same time I do think that a more elastic administration of the schemes in some matters of detail would certainly have forwarded the interests of the Department's work in some of the counties, and, I think, would have gone in a large measure to popularise the administration of the Department at an earlier stage of its work. I think that the committees, now that they are becoming familiar with the principles on which the Department administers, are more tolerant, and recognise the necessity of what at the outset they were slow to see."

In order to illustrate this statement, Mr. O'Neill refers to a question which had arisen between the agricultural committee and the Department about the poultry scheme. This scheme was put in operation by the committee for three years. The attendance at the lectures did not satisfy the committee, and they consequently

"came to the conclusion that as the people had not manifested a desire to attend for the purpose of being instructed—and I admit they needed the instruction—we had not received the co-operation from the people that we desired. The committee thought that they would not be justified in continuing the portions of the scheme which had proved unpopular, and they made a proposal with that intention to the Department, which the Department refused to sanction. I admit there was a strong show of reason for the Department's attitude, their contention being that instruction should go on at the same time as the demonstrations with regard to other branches of the subject; but a feeling prevailed at my committee that, as the people had not manifested the desire, they would not be considered as wisely administering public funds by retaining officials to give lectures to audiences which did not assemble. I only give this as an instance in which I think more elasticity in the administration of the fund might in some degree have tended to popularise the administration of the Department."

At a later stage in his evidence Mr. O'Neill deals with the general question whether the time has not come to give rather more freedom of action to county committees:—

"It is just possible, now that these committees have been in some degree educated, that it would be wiser to give them a little more power than they have hitherto exercised."

Mr. O'Neill discusses the possible application of this suggestion to horse-breeding and cattle schemes. He speaks very highly of the benefits derived from those schemes, which he considers to be quite on right lines, but desires their extension. He also speaks most highly of the action of the Department with regard to the introduction and development of new varieties of potatoes. He desires a great extension of the Department's work, and thinks more funds are greatly needed.

As already observed, Mr. O'Neill's evidence, though applicable to, is by no means confined to the limits of the county of Dublin. It explains to some extent the reasons which have caused the county committee not to avail themselves of the services of instructors. Mr. Mooney, who has ceased to be a member of the committee, gave no evidence bearing on the working of the schemes in the county, except that he refers to the dropping of the poultry scheme. He says no one came to listen to the lectures, but "the eggs were greatly appreciated and had a good effect," and the committee asked the Department to let them have the eggs part of the scheme, and drop the lectures. "But no, they would not; it was a scheme for all Ireland, and the lectures and eggs must go together; you must take the lecture or you won't get the eggs. Now, that is silly and ridiculous."

The tables printed in the Appendix show that Dublin county raises a 1d. rate, and that the nominations of mares and premiums for bulls were fully taken up.

The latest report published for the county of Kildare was for the year 1903-4, and shows the schemes for agriculture, horticulture, butter-making, and poultry in full operation, under instructors, whose lectures appear generally to have been very well attended. The live stock schemes, the farm

and cottage prize schemes, and especially the horticultural scheme, appear to be in full operation. In this county the work of the Department appears to be going on smoothly and successfully.

Mr. Malone, member of the committee and also of the county council, says that the committee has got on very well with the Department, and that the instructors have certainly done a great deal of good. He would like to give more in prizes for small farms and cottages. "I think that has done a wonderful sight of good in the country." He would also give more to showmen. A good deal has been done by demonstration plots, "but it would be better if we had a farm, though the farm would be too expensive." Mr. James Behan, a practical farmer in the county, speaks highly of the value of agricultural lectures. He mentions the difficulty of getting any suitable hall or other place for the purpose, and advocates the formation of local committees to make necessary arrangements.

The chairman of the Kilkenny committee of agriculture, Major Connellan, also a member of the Council of Agriculture, told us that at first they were not altogether fortunate in their instructors, and at present the county appears to be without agricultural instruction. He speaks favourably of the good done in the county, especially as regards horse-breeding. With regard to the bull scheme, he wishes for an arrangement whereby, when a premium is not taken up, it may be given to another applicant. The Department has not as yet seen its way to meet the wishes of the committee. This county, like Limerick, was anxious for an earlier adoption of the dairy-cow scheme. Major Connellan speaks favourably of the results of the poultry scheme. Last year 1,468 dozen of eggs from pure breeds were distributed. Also he states that the instruction in butter-making and bee-keeping has been successful so far. Mr. John Butler, another member of the committee, somewhat strongly criticised the action of the Department. He alleged dictatorial conduct and delay in the adoption of the county scheme. Mr. Brennan, a member of the committee and of the Council of Agriculture, thinks that the Department has not met with approval generally, and that nine-tenths of the farmers are losing interest in it. The report of the committee for 1904-5 shows that the nominations for mares were 100; they were raised in the following year to 150, and it will be seen from the table in the Appendix that they were all taken up in the year 1906. Twenty-three premiums were allotted for bulls; 16 were taken up in 1905, and 17 were taken up in 1906. The committee, in their report, urge the adoption of some plan for re-allotting the premiums not taken up. The premiums for boars do not appear to be in favour. The committee report favourably on the result of the instruction in horticulture and bee-keeping, and on the results of the potato-spraying experiments. This county appears to have suffered from having been without an agricultural instructor for nearly two years.

A very interesting report was published in 1906 by the King's county joint technical committee and the King's county committee for agriculture and live stock, on the operations for the year ending September 30, 1905. This is the third annual report for this county. No less than 15 local committees "for the furtherance of technical instruction and agricultural and live stock schemes" were established in the county, and the names of the members of the various committees are given. In a large number of the committees the names of the clergy, both Catholic and Protestant, appear. The report speaks with praise of this organisation and its working. "When local effort is wanting the results cannot be satisfactory."

At the date of the report the county was without the services of a qualified agricultural instructor. "The fact constitutes a crying need." The committee decided to wait for a qualified Irishman. One has since been appointed.

A horticultural instructor was first appointed in October, 1905, and the committee, in December of that year, note with satisfaction that up to that date "orders for over 1,000 fruit trees have been received by the committee, the variety and purchase being left to the instructor."

"There is every reason to hope that fruit growing will be a commercial success in King's County. The soil has been pronounced suitable, the interest of the farmers has been awakened, and the transit question will duly be tackled. The instructor is also receiving orders for forest trees."

The courses in butter-making appear to have been successful. The Rev. P. O'Donohoe, C.C., member of the Cloughan local committee, reports:—

"The teachers were most agreeable, and seemed anxious to do everything to make their classes both interesting and beneficial to the pupils. They willingly visited the dairies of the farmers in the locality when invited, and gave many useful hints on the art of butter-making. Instead of trying to explain the use of some improved type on the art of butter-making, which, however superior, is inaccessible to the majority of small farmers, they showed them how to make the best use of those at hand; and instead of expatiating on some new-fangled method of butter-making, they followed the system with which the people were acquainted, and showed them how that system might be improved. Consequently this course of instruction, owing to the judgment and common sense of the instructress, has left tangible results."

Full information and some useful criticisms are contained in the report as to the working of the cattle and boar schemes, which appear to give much satisfaction. As to the prizes for cottages and small farms, it is stated that none of the county schemes has given more satisfaction.

12011-12.

Mr. Darby, representing the county committee, gave some very useful evidence, with respect to the southern part of the county, as to the need of veterinary advice and assistance. He favours the encouragement of well-bred bulls other than thoroughbred, and the requirement of a licence for service, and expresses an opinion in favour of the Department concentrating its attention on fewer objects. He speaks of the improvement which has resulted from the pig-breeding scheme, and gives some useful evidence as to the promotion of a bacon-curing factory at Roscrea.

12052-53.

12041.

12043-53.

12722-23.

Mr. Egan, a member of the agricultural committee, representing the northern part of the county, regrets that reductions have this year had to be made in the nominations for mares and in premium boars. There has also been a reduction of one premium bull. Mr. Egan is in favour of restrictions on the use of inferior stallions and bulls. He also strongly insists on the need for improved facilities for marketing butter and eggs by co-operation or otherwise.

1202-72.

Mr. Corbett, a member of the county council and also of the Council of Agriculture, gives evidence to the same effect as Mr. Egan as to the desirability of limiting the use of unsound horses and bulls, and wishes bulls selected for premiums to be put up for public auction. He thinks at present the price is unduly increased. With some criticisms he thinks that in this county there has been decided improvement in the breeding of cattle.

Longford.

No witness appeared before us representing the agricultural committee of the county Longford. We have been furnished with the report of the committee for the year 1904-5, by which it appears that the schemes in force in that year were the live stock schemes, cattle, horses, and swine, the poultry, the butter-making, and the farm prize scheme.

The committee refer with gratification to the excellence of the mares exhibited at the shows held at the competition for nominations, which were considered by the very experienced judges to have been superior to the exhibits of any county in Ireland except two. The report dwelt on the great advisability of the introduction of a good type of draught horse.

The number of premiums for bulls offered by the committee was increased in the year referred to from 12 to 14, and the report dwells on the importance of farmers exerting themselves to procure premium bulls, and points out the advantageous terms on which they can be obtained by means of the Department's system of loans. Similar observations are made with reference to the swine scheme. The marked success of the poultry scheme in this county has already been referred to.

The question of the desirability of introducing instruction in butter-making appears to have been a good deal discussed in this county. The introduction of creameries had, it appears, practically killed the old home butter-making industry. The majority of the committee were of opinion that while butter for export could only be properly produced at the creameries, there was still a market for home-grown butter made under sanitary conditions, and then the evil existing from sending every drop of milk to the creameries, and depriving children of their proper food, might be averted. They therefore appointed an instructress "to preserve in the country a knowledge of butter-making on scientific principles," and the keeping of milk in sanitary condition.

The committee express themselves satisfied with the results of the efforts of the instructress, and express a hope that practice of home dairying will increase in the county.

The committee say that no scheme has done greater good than the prize scheme for cottages and small farms. There were in the year 77 entries.

The Longford Agricultural Society's show for the first time contributed specimens of all matters included in the agricultural schemes, and was a distinct advance on any previous display of the Society. The committee are convinced that it is impossible to measure the good done by such shows.

The report goes on to speak of the marvellous anxiety of the people to hear Professor Mason's lectures on veterinary hygiene.

The report of the committee for county Louth deals with the working of the schemes for the years 1903-4. Full details are given of the working of the schemes, which seem to give satisfaction. The work of the itinerant instructors is specially commended. Only one representative witness, Mr. Dolan, member of the committee, gave evidence before us. He reports very favourably on the working of the live stock, butter and poultry schemes. The horticultural scheme, he says, has not been successful, the county not being adapted for gardening. Speaking generally, he says:—

Louth.

13414-7.

"I think the schemes carried out by the Department and the County Committees have had definitely useful and profitable results which, so far as I can judge, repaid their own cost."

The county committee for Meath are in the habit of making reports to the county council every quarter. Those for 1905 have been furnished. Each meeting of the committee and the members present are recorded. They furnish full details of the working of the schemes, all of which, except the flax scheme, appear to be in full operation in the county. Colonel Everard, member of the Board of Agriculture, and chairman of the agricultural committee, said that the number of persons who have taken advantage of the schemes has increased year by year, and that the only scheme which had not been a complete success was the farm and cottage scheme for which entries had fallen off. Mr. Kennedy, member of the Council of Agriculture and of the county committee, thinks the Department aims too high as regards the bulls selected for premiums, and that a second-class bull, provided he is pure-bred, would suit the purpose, and be cheaper. Although the live stock schemes have benefited some small farmers, he does not think much tangible benefit has resulted in the county. After reviewing the working of other schemes, he says that there has been improvement since the Act came into force. "It is not easy to see what you can do, but it is in the right direction." Mr. Steen, also a member of the committee, substantially agrees with Mr. Kennedy, and is of opinion that a good deal of improvement has been done under the bull scheme, but there are a great many improvements which might be carried out. These he proceeds to discuss. His general conclusion as to the work done by the Department is that as far as agriculture has gone, it is working well. The Rev. Robert Barry, P.P., had some complaints to make about the Department's action in refusing to sanction the appointment of an agricultural instructor, which was desired by the committee, on the ground that he was not properly qualified. There is no reason to suppose that the Department was not, in this respect, acting consistently with its duty.

Meath.

14922.

4919-28.

4102.

11020-26.

11779.

15115.

No report is published by the Queen's county committee of agriculture. The committee were represented before us by Colonel Poë, C.R., who had taken pains to make inquiries at the different centres in the county and to embody the results in his evidence. Colonel Poë complains of the want of funds to carry on satisfactorily the various schemes. He contrasts the state of things when the Department first came into existence with that which now exists.

Queen's County.

11425.

"Thanks, however, to the whole-hearted manner in which the Department has thrown itself into the work, and to the energy and zeal displayed by its officials, the time has now come when the people fully realise the value of the instruction which is being given, and the possibilities which lie before them, if only the Department is prepared to administer the Act in a more generous and, perhaps I should say, a more judicious manner than they have hitherto been able to do."

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With regard to the agricultural schemes, Colonel Poë speaks of the great need in the county of instruction in dairying, and says that the classes in this subject have been attended with much success. Unfortunately, from want of funds, the committee have found it necessary to drop poultry instruction, and a proposal to allow the same instructress to give instruction both in dairying and in poultry-keeping was refused by the Department. The committee also, for the same reason, wish to amalgamate agricultural and horticultural instruction, but no definite proposal appears to have been made for this purpose. Colonel Poë, also, has some criticism to make upon the live stock scheme similar to that of Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Steen in Meath, and would have all bulls used for service registered. The opinion of Queen's county seems to be in favour of the further development on the existing lines of the present schemes, with some modifications and improvements by the aid of further funds.

Westmeath.

No report is published by the committee of county Westmeath.

Sir Walter Nugent, a member of the committee, appeared as their representative, and expressed the opinion that the Department had done as well as any Department could do that was not under popular control. He thinks the cattle scheme has done "a great lot of good," also that the winter shows and agricultural plots have greatly improved the appearance of the county, and have made the labourers' cottages look quite different.

The county has one agricultural instructor, one poultry-keeping, and two butter-making instructresses, and one horticultural instructor, who also gives instruction in bee-keeping. He says the itinerant instruction has not been thought a success, but that butter-making has been a success all over the county.

Mr. Downes, chairman of the county council and a member of the Council of Agriculture, whose evidence was mainly directed to the constitution of the Department and Agricultural Board, said that in county Westmeath there had been practically no friction with the Department, that the schemes, taken as a whole, were well-conceived, and were doing a great deal of good. "They are not fully understood by the country yet, but they are being grappled with by degrees, and I think the country is being gradually improved by these schemes."

Wexford

No report is issued by the agricultural committee of county Wexford. Mr. Frizelle, the secretary of the committee, states that the relations between his committee and the Department have always been of the most cordial character, and speaks most warmly of the assistance always afforded by the officials of the Department. He gives many details in support of this statement. The live stock schemes, for instance, have, as the result of negotiations, been brought more into conformity with local wishes.

Mr. Frizelle refers to the establishment of agricultural classes as likely to do a great deal of good. A great many more pupils might be accepted, but a great many, owing to the unsatisfactory condition of primary education, are unable to pass the required examination. Mr. Bolger, Mr. Hore, and Mr. Codd, members of the committee, are anxious for the establishment in the county of an agricultural station like Clonsilla.

Mr. Rice, a practical farmer in the county, speaks of the appreciation in his district of the live stock scheme, and wishes for more premium bulls and more lectures on rearing young stock and on veterinary matters. Some of the witnesses speak of the importance of co-operation amongst farmers to facilitate despatch of agricultural produce. Wexford affords a good instance of the work of the Department in a prosperous and fertile county.

It is the practice of the committee of agriculture for county Wicklow to circulate the schemes for the coming year in pamphlet form, containing full information as to the schemes in force, and all details such as the names and addresses of the holders of egg distributing stations, and of the owners of premium bulls, schedules of prizes, list of Department's leaflets, &c., but no report is made on the proceedings of the past year.

11280-1.

11289

11285-06

11434-42

11468

12213-18

11850

11850-04

10639
10713.
10635.

10487.

10486.

Wicklow.

The evidence of the chairman of the committee, Mr. Cogan, M.P., has been quoted in the Report in another connection. With regard to the relations of the Department with the county committee, he considers the schemes of "too cast-iron a character." Mr. Cogan is an advocate of small model farms.

"We also think, now that the people, through the agency of itinerant lectures and instruction, have been induced to take a livelier interest in acquiring practical up-to-date agricultural knowledge, one or two farms from thirty to fifty acres each should be acquired in each county, and worked as training grounds for the sons of small farmers and agricultural labourers on the German plan, and which at the same time would act as models for the farmers of the county; but it should be laid down as a primary condition that these farms should be self-supporting and should be worked on a sound commercial basis, and the accounts and results of their working published annually, so that the public could see whether the methods adopted by the experts were successful and ought to be adopted by themselves or not. I submit this would have been a much more effective plan of teaching the agricultural population the most approved scientific and economical system of farming than the purchase of those large, unwieldy farms of 700 acres in other parts of Ireland which Professor Campbell referred to in his evidence. If the 2,100 acres had been split up in this manner in the thirty-three administrative counties of Ireland, they would each have two farms of over thirty acres each, and surely if, as is contended, the arable land of Ireland would pay best in farms of about this size, properly cultivated, this plan would have been the most natural one to adopt."

This is an excellent statement of a view somewhat widely held. It raises an important question of policy which has been dealt with in the Report. Mr. O'Kelly, chairman of the county council and of the agricultural committee, thinks the time has now arrived when itinerant instructors would be more usefully employed by giving farmers instruction and advice at their homes. He also states the committee would like to see two demonstration farms established in the county; "so that it could be shown from the profit made whether these things are practical or not." The Rev. J. R. Willis dealt with the desirability of giving instruction to farmers' sons at one or two county centres, and also pointed out the danger of the purchases of poultry for the station at Avondale interfering with local traders. Mr. P. J. Carey, who said that the scheme for improvement in the breed of cattle had been fairly successful, but the pig scheme had been a comparative failure. He spoke highly of the working of the scheme of agricultural instruction. Mr. Halpin, a farmer, gave a favourable account of the working of the live stock scheme, the butter-making scheme, and the cottage and farm prize schemes. He advocates the development of the system of demonstration plots with small model farms of 20 acres, the Department paying for seeds and manures, and he also strongly advocates co-operation among farmers and loans for encouragement of planting.

It appears from the print circulated by the committee that for the current year the committee have provided for 140 nominations of mares, 16 premiums to bulls, 4 premiums to boars, and a special sheep scheme. Under the poultry scheme provision is made for 13 egg stations for hens and ducks, 5 for geese, and 5 turkey premiums.

Paragraph 38.

11793

11817.

Paragraphs 45-9, 248, 268

11100.

14321.

11003

12014.

12292.

12726-27.

12704

12753

MEMORANDUM ON CERTAIN AGRICULTURAL QUESTIONS
PREPARED AT THE REQUEST OF THE CHAIRMAN BY
THE HON. JOHN DRYDEN, AND REFERRED TO IN THE
REPORT AS MR. DRYDEN'S MEMORANDUM.

The following notes give in a somewhat condensed form the impressions in relation to agriculture which have been made upon my mind by a personal inspection in many parts of Ireland made during the weeks between the different sittings of the Committee:—

First let me state that I have been agreeably disappointed with the general condition of this industry in Ireland. From rumours which I had repeatedly heard, I had received the impression that agriculture generally was very backward. But after a personal examination, I find that the extremes in poverty of soil, as well as methods, so often heard refer principally to the Congested Districts, and a limited area in other parts bordering on the same conditions.

These lands are not suitable for advanced agriculture. Much of it, as at present handled, must be subject only to spade cultivation, and cannot therefore compete with the richer soils found in other parts of the country. As it forms only a small percentage of the whole, it is manifestly unfair to speak of it except as a separate part of the whole country. It is, no doubt, subject to improvement, but the conditions are such that the whole district would require to be put in the third or fourth class.

Setting aside these congested districts, and those devoted to supplying peat, the balance would compare favourably with most countries prominent in agricultural production as to qualities of soil and possibilities of improvement in its products.

Under present conditions in Ireland it will not be denied by anyone conversant with the country that by far the greatest industry is agriculture. It would seem that for many years, while other countries were forging ahead in the improvement of the products of the soil, and the education of the workers in agriculture, in Ireland the general policy was to leave every man to himself, and so allow the country to drift without proper guidance. The effect could easily be foretold, causing the country to fall behind the first place in this industrial race of the nations. Within the last ten years there has been an awakening in this respect, accompanied by an earnest desire to render assistance on the part of those charged with the government of the country. This, as all know, developed into the organisation of the present Department of Agriculture, with its powers and authority fixed by the Statute passed in that behalf in the year 1899.

I wish to give, as an outsider, the opinion I have formed of the probable results of the efforts of the people under the guidance of the Department thus empowered and equipped to render assistance in this matter. From observations made, I conclude that many of the people are impatient as to results. A Department like this cannot be organised in a year or two. Mistakes in plans as well as appointments are inevitable. But even if this were not so, the number who can be reached in the beginning are, for various reasons, exceedingly limited.

In the introduction of improved methods, as well as improved live stock, it takes a considerable time to permeate to the masses of the people—ignorance, prejudice, jealousy are all arrayed against those charged with working a revolution in this industry.

Little by little these may be overcome, but it will not be hastily accomplished. Patience and perseverance must be steadily exercised before the entire lump can be leavened.

From observation and inquiry, I am confident a good beginning has been made, but the full benefit has not been realised as yet, and indeed, in my judgment, it is still some years in the distance. Influences of this kind increase and multiply as the years go by. The advance in the tenth year will no doubt be more than ten times that of the first year. It is like the child's snowball—the more it rolls the faster it gathers.

My impression is that the ideals of those charged with the control of the Department are in the main correct. Two things have been prominently before them—First to prepare for the obligations which the future will surely bring by fitting young men and young women both to teach and to practise the principles of higher agriculture. To this end several

institutions are already in operation, and others are preparing where the necessary training can be given. At the head of these stands the College at Glasnevin, which, when it is complete, will send out annually a number of young men well equipped both for teaching and practising the most approved methods of agriculture. Surely this is the first great need, inasmuch as it will consume years before the real results can be reached. Following this, and coupled with it, are other schools or stations where the practical work of the farm is made the prominent feature, being coupled with a shorter course of instruction only intended to prepare the young man or woman for work on his own farm, and not to become a teacher of others. An example of this is the farm now in operation at Athenry, as well as the Munster Institute for girls and the work at Clonakilty. But all these schools, though necessary, touch only a limited number of the population, and while good as far as they go, do not at all reach the mass of the people at present engaged in this industry. If these were left to shift for themselves the Department would very properly be subject to severe and just criticism. The controlling authorities have seen this, and in addition to schools and colleges have by numerous ingenious methods attempted to reach the different branches of the industry.

I will mention these separately. Take as the first the scheme adopted for the improvement of poultry. It was entirely new to me, and is specially adapted to supply the needs of the labourer and small farmer, who in their present position are unable to help themselves.

The schemes combine very accurately, I think, local control with the granting of aid by the controlling authority. The management of these schemes is very wisely given to the County Council in each section. The Councils appoint a Committee, to whom is given the working of the details of the scheme adopted. I assume the object in appointing a Committee of the Council is that a smaller body would be able to meet more frequently, and generally control the practical work with greater ease and accuracy. But in some counties the whole Council are on this Committee, and in addition a number of others, making the whole number fifty, sixty, and even one hundred. To me this makes it unwieldy and cumbrous, and does not tend towards efficiency. I would prefer to fix by statute some limit to these Committees, and especially as I have observed that the best work is done by the smaller Committee. The Committee of the County Council selects the farmers in the various districts suitable to be their agent and employee in scattering in the surrounding country a better variety of eggs for hatching. He is required to put away all mongrel or cross-bred fowls, and accept and care for the fowls of the particular breed selected according to instructions supplied by the Inspector of the Department. These fowls are furnished him, and on the understanding that he supplies at one shilling per dozen at least seventy settings of eggs each season, he receives £5 from the Department. In order to interest the people in the scheme a lady is employed as an itinerant instructor, holding meetings, visiting cottages, and stirring the people to take advantage of the opportunities offered. It has appeared to me that this scheme has very much to commend it, and it is easily seen that when in most districts of the country this work is in progress, that the whole egg and poultry product will soon be revolutionised. The increased output, as well as the improved quality, must add materially to the receipts of the people engaged in it. Besides this, the improved methods of housing and caring for the poultry will guard them from disease and much loss on that account. These are what are spoken of in the evidence as "Egg Stations."

In one county only a different means is adopted to scatter among the people eggs of many of the improved breeds. Twenty-two acres are set apart as a poultry farm, and an efficient man well versed in all the knowledge required for breeding and handling to the best advantage any or all the different breeds of fowls placed in charge. It is situated in Cullybackey in the County of Antrim. When I visited it, there were about 1,000 birds of various breeds and ages. From this farm as a centre the eggs as well as young chickens are scattered throughout the county at moderate prices. Besides this, it is intended as an object lesson where visitors can come and see how to handle and manage them, and obtain any

information needed. It is claimed that the scheme is working well, especially as a lady itinerant instructor has been employed in going from place to place addressing and stimulating the people to take advantage of the scheme as here operated.

I doubt, however, if this scheme is so well adapted for the country generally as the "Egg Station" scheme, which is much more simple and more easily put in motion.

I ought to say that this poultry farm is under the control of the County Committee, and, I understand, pays its way, and has a small sum to its credit. It may be well to have one or two such farms where superior birds can be produced for the benefit of the various Egg Stations.

There is still another form of instruction just being tested this season, and is intended to supplement and put into practice the itinerant instruction ordinarily given. I call it a "Perambulating Poultry Farm." An acre or two of suitable land is selected and fenced, which contains, say, two pens of different improved breeds of poultry, with ducks or geese added, if required. This farm is located for a period of "six weeks," and is provided with buildings so constructed as to be easily taken down and set up again. There are as well incubators and all other appliances ordinarily used by any poultry raiser. The class meet here from day to day, chickens are hatched and cared for, and each member of the class is required to actually do all the work, and take entire charge from time to time.

In other words, besides being taught the theory they learn how to do all that is necessary by actually doing it, which is, after all, the only true way to become efficient.

I was greatly impressed with the value of this scheme, and feel sure that after a county had been covered a few times the instruction necessary for the best production would have permeated everywhere. These poultry schemes in some form are in operation in every part of Ireland, and in a few years must increase the annual revenue from poultry by a very considerable sum.

Next I refer to the attempt to bring about an improvement of the cattle of the country. Here a similar scheme has been devised, and, I understand, was first put in operation by the Royal Dublin Agricultural Society, only on a much smaller scale. It consists of a bonus, or premium, as it is called, given to some farmer selected by the Committee on condition that he gives to his neighbours the use of the bull for forty cows at one shilling each.

The premium now is £15 per annum for three and even four years, and is a liberal allowance for the purpose. Nearly one thousand of these bulls are placed in the different counties this year, all of them having passed an inspection by the official inspector appointed by the Department, and all of them being registered as belonging to one of the improved breeds. These at present in use are not sufficient to cover every part, but the influence must rapidly widen and very soon make a distinct improvement on the annual output.

A large percentage of those now in use are Shorthorns, with a few Polled Angus, Hereford and Galloway, the latter being used in the poorer districts. If care be taken in the selection of the bulls, the milking qualities can be preserved, while the output of beef will be vastly increased in value.

A strong feeling is prevalent among many of the farmers that they should be allowed to use cross-bred bulls of approved type in addition to the pure-bred or registered bulls, to which they are now confined. They base their appeal upon differing statements as follows:—

- (1.) The difficulty now experienced in securing a sufficient number of satisfactory registered animals owing to the present excessive demand.
- (2.) The very high prices of the best pedigreed animals placing them entirely beyond the reach of the majority desiring improvement.
- (3.) If graded bulls could be encouraged, they would displace the inferior scrubs now extensively used, and prepare the way for the registered pedigree bulls.

(4.) The total number of hulls available for selection for a premium would be greatly increased.

I am free to confess that this presentation of the case calls forth my sympathy, and I think is worthy of being considered. The carrying it out is, however, beset with numerous difficulties which will appear to most persons entirely insurmountable. To select for service an unregistered cross-bred hull, without regard to his breeding, even though he presented a good appearance, might lead the owner backward and not forward. On the other hand, non-pedigree hulls might be found tracing backward through a number of well-formed individuals of really good breeding, especially on the side of the sires. Bulls sired by registered hulls, and out of these well-bred though unregistered cows would be a vast improvement on the inferior scrubs, with neither breeding nor proper conformation, now comprising the vast majority in use in Ireland. But how could such selection be effected? I fear the officers of the Department would shudder at the thought of attempting it. It could only be done by a personal examination of the different individuals, and a consideration of the breeding in each case. A pedigree is valuable, not merely because it is registered in the Herd Book, but because it reveals in the ancestry a continuous line of superior individuals, which guarantees a prepotent power to transmit the good qualities shown to every descendant. Such prepotency may be found in families never yet accepted for registration, and the contrary is also true: that it is not always seen in those accepted in and shown in the Herd Book.

To encourage the use of non-pedigreed hulls indiscriminately would, in my judgment, be ruinous in the extreme. Only those carefully bred for several generations should in any case be encouraged. These, after inspection, might be accepted for registration in a special record arranged for the purpose, with the view of allowing the use of sires of such breeding when a definite stage had been reached, provided the quality of the individual would warrant it.

These sires would naturally be less expensive, and might call for a smaller premium, and, if desirable, be designated for special districts, but always, as at present, subject to a rigid inspection as to quality, substance and constitution.

If I were guiding such an inspection, especially of Shorthorn grades, I would insist on the milking qualities being kept prominently in view, with the idea of encouraging the greatest combined production of milk and beef possible. A beef animal without milking properties is entirely unsuitable to the majority of farmers in Ireland, however well they may answer on the ranching areas of other countries.

The above is the only plan which presents itself to me by which it would be safe to depart at all from present methods. Whether it is worth while thus to stimulate the grading up of the best among the present herds of non-pedigree cattle, I must leave for the decision of those in authority. If it could be done, it would prove the highest incentive to reserve in individual herds the choicest females, and thus gradually bring them to a much higher standard.*

A scheme somewhat similar to that for cattle is in operation for the improvement of swine. Premium boars are selected, and placed in a similar manner to the hulls, the object being to improve the bacon output, much of which is exported to England. Unfortunately, in some sections, a strong prejudice exists against the introduction of any foreign breed. I have heard the whole case for and against put upon the shape of the ear, the farmer declaring he would not produce a pig whose ears did not lop downwards rather than stand erect. Others dislike to see hair on the pig, but prefer to see the skin practically bare. It is a pity that such fads or prejudices should stand in the way of improvement, but this is not peculiar to Ireland. Similar prejudices require to be overcome in other countries. The real question which the farmer should consider is what breed will produce at the least cost the best bacon. It is not merely weight of a given quantity which is required, but a proper weight of flesh as against fat.

* Note by Mr. Dryden, dated 6th May, 1907. Since my last return from Canada, I have been informed that the Department has already set in motion an inspection and registration along the lines here presented.

The shape or size of the ear is a matter of small importance, but the character of the product is of prime importance, and must be attended to if the best markets are to be held for Irish hacon.

The Horse Scheme is worked on a somewhat different manner. The stallion is selected and inspected the same as in other schemes referred to, but instead of a definite sum the County Committee pay the owner the usual fee of two, three, or four pounds for the service of each mare. In some counties these mares are selected or nominated by judges appointed for the purpose. The improvement of the horse is more difficult than any other class of live stock. There are in every country so many opinions as to what is best and what cross is suitable for the district, that it is always found very difficult to unite the people in a co-operative way. In Ireland, however, I have found more than ordinary unanimity of action, and I have no doubt in most parts much improvement is going on.

I have repeatedly heard a demand expressed for the restoration of what is called "The Irish Draught Horse." No doubt a species of horses once existed in Ireland known by that name. So far as I know they were never registered, but from the best known facts they were originally produced by two brothers living, I believe, in or near the County of Kildare. From these studs as a centre they were scattered into different parts of Ireland and gave immense satisfaction.

They are described as heavy bodied, rather low set, yet smart, with clean, strong limbs, good style and action. I can readily imagine that such a horse would for many parts of Ireland be extremely useful. The Clyde or Shire are too heavy and slow. The loads drawn are not heavy, and therefore a horse more alert and active meets the necessities for plough cart, and gig better than a greater weight. At all events, it seems clear that the so-called Irish Draught Horse has a fast hold on the memories of the agricultural population, and hence the demand for its restoration. It is not strange that the peculiar conditions in Ireland should demand a different style of horse than Scotland or England, where the situation and needs are different, but, so far as I can learn, these horses have entirely passed out of existence.

It is said that the brothers' families who originated them died out altogether, and with them the horses disappeared also. Whether they can ever be restored again is a question yet unanswered. The Department, I understand, have undertaken it, but this is scarcely such work as should be assigned to a public branch of Government.

It cannot be handed to any official to work out. The guiding spirit in such a work must have time and must also be gifted with an intuition to choose wisely among different specimens so as to fix the type required. To produce one animal is not enough. The object is to found a family with the required characteristics and power to transmit them. The sires should be possessed with prepotency, so as to leave their impress on the ordinary breeding mare. I am informed that, answering to the call of the Department, five stallions of the original type have been discovered, but although every encouragement has been held out, no mares have, so far, been presented.

The Department have lately opened a Record in which stallions of the desired type are to be registered, the object being to stimulate the further production of horses of this type and preserve them in a distinct class. The ideal set forth in the Department's leaflet is as follows:—Not less than fifteen hands high—short, clean flat legs—well-set joints—good feet—good head and rein—well laid back shoulders—indications throughout of power to do general farm and harness work—action free and light stepping. It is further stated that horses for draught purposes is what is required, and that animals of the half-bred hunter type, or showing a distinct trace of Shire, Clydesdale, or Hackney blood will not be eligible, and will not be inspected.

Then, in reference to the tillage of the soil, application of manures, etc., I have been much surprised at the efforts to improve present methods. A system of what is called itinerant instruction has been devised, which means that an Instructor appointed in any one of the branches travels from

point to point in his territory, holding meetings, giving advice and direction to all who will receive it. These are divided into four main branches or divisions, viz., Agriculture, Horticulture, Poultry, and Butter-making, while in some parts Bee-keeping is added. In all the 32 counties, except Donegal, these instructors are working in one or more branches. In 1906 there were 21 giving instruction in Agriculture and Horticulture, 28 in Poultry-raising, and 24 Butter instructors. The success of this work depends largely on the ability of the instructor. In many counties where I have been the instructor has become exceedingly popular, and accordingly is in great demand, and astonishing statements are made as to benefits received. In other cases the influence is not so marked, nor does the enthusiasm run so high. Still, when one remembers that in Ireland there are nearly one hundred itinerant instructors working the year round, it is plain that in a few years the whole country will have been reached and more correct methods instituted.

In connection with both Agriculture and Horticulture numerous testing and experimental plots are seen in different parts showing the advantage of better seed, suitable manures, newer varieties, and better methods of tillage. I have in my cursory examination seen wonderful results in the value of the crops growing side by side. One gentleman conveyed the information that a field which in the past had been more or less barren had, by the use of suitable manures, developed into a veritable gold mine.

These plots are all seen on land worked by average farmers of the district, and serve as the best possible lesson to their neighbours.

The influence is, in my judgment, more decided and more likely to be followed than when it is seen on a Government-owned farm. In the latter case men are wont to say—"Oh, yes, it is all very well for the Government, with no end of money and assistance, to show good returns. How can I compete with them? Or, how can I, an ordinary farmer, copy it?" All this is avoided when the example is shown on an ordinary crop of a neighbouring farmer. Some there are who strongly advocate numerous Government farms in every district, and especially in the congested areas. I am fully persuaded this would be a decided blunder. A far better effect would be produced by inducing a farmer here and there to adopt the new scheme, or plan of operation, concerning which improvement is desired. When he is seen doing it, his neighbour immediately concludes, "If Jim or Pat can do that, so can I, and I believe I can beat him, too." It is the same in every country, and is accounted for only by the strange perversity of human nature. Government farms, as a mere example, will generally fail in accomplishing any improvement in the ordinary man's methods. It is much better, and certainly much less expensive, to educate him by repeated lessons and stimulate him through his neighbour in like circumstances than to establish a fancy farm which he is inclined to consider far above him, and hence impossible to copy.

In Horticulture, the instructor, besides delivering lectures, giving advice, etc., superintends and directs the planting of fruit and garden plots. Where the farmer desires to commence fruit-growing as a business, the Department undertakes to furnish trees of the most suitable varieties for his district at the lowest possible price. The Department also furnish expert advice as to planting, cultivation, trimming of trees, etc. The result is that in many sections considerable areas are being devoted to this branch of Agriculture. The results are, I believe, almost certain, and I have no doubt that in ten years' time a very pronounced additional income will be received from this source where none exists at present. In many parts of Ireland both climate and soil are admirably adapted for the production of the best fruit. The market is unlimited, so that the outlook in this direction gives strength and permanency to the efforts now put forth.

The Instruction in Dairying and Poultry-raising is almost entirely given by lady instructors, and is spoken of everywhere in terms of high commendation. There is, perhaps, no branch of Agriculture where the need for some change in the methods employed was more apparent than in these. In Poultry the varieties used needed new blood, or to be entirely displaced by other varieties more profitable. Improper housing and management had developed unhealthy stock, from which it was impossible to secure

had developed unhealthy stock, from which it was impossible to secure good results. The scheme adopted I have already described, and the financial results are already making a distinct impression. Some do not hesitate to say that the money value of the Poultry has advanced fully 20 to 25 per cent. This is a large increase so early after the instructors began. From this time it will rapidly increase. The climate seems admirably adapted to permit of the very best results.

No attempt appears to be made by the officers of the Department in dairying, except in one direction. There are no lessons on cheese-making which have come under my observation, but the main object has been to secure the best results in the home butter-making. The lady instructors have been diligently pursuing their efforts in this work all over the country. I have seen some of the classes at work, and the arrangements are well adapted to produce the best results. What these are can be seen in any of the numerous butter-making competitions now being held in many places; some of which I was greatly interested to witness. Some there are who are so delighted with the change now being seen as to prophesy that home butter-making will in time replace the creamery system. I am not so optimistic of this result, but I mention it as showing the satisfaction with the work being accomplished. Like everything else in this line, it takes time to show full results. In these classes the girls are quite young in many cases, and when one thinks of the entire reversal in methods, we cannot wonder that all are not at first accepted. The best educator who can give effect to all this instruction is the purchaser who will readily advance the price for a superior article. In some markets this is done at present, and affords the best stimulus possible for the production of the best quality. It will ultimately become general, and then the instructor will be more welcome than ever.

I must not omit to mention the effort to improve the home life of some of the rural districts. Anyone who travels through and becomes at all intimate with the style of living in many of these homes, especially in the poorer areas, will be most ready to speak in approving terms of any attempt to remedy what is only too apparent.

Houses of the rudest and most antiquated construction, with low ceilings, little light, the earth for flooring, or stones anything but smooth, and which only gather and retain filth, may be seen in many parts of Ireland.

There is no attempt at cleanliness, and there is no wonder when disease gets a foothold in such a dwelling, it is practically impossible to eradicate it. There seems to the onlooker not a semblance of comfort in such a home. The farm animals, especially the poultry, find in it a common resort with the members of the family. Generations have come and gone in these homes, and no wonder that ambition for something better has apparently died out. The people, if not satisfied, are acquiescent in their unfortunate position.

I was pleased, therefore, to see that the Department is grappling with this problem. While another body is attempting to furnish for the labourers, and also to some extent the small farmers, with more modern although still very humble cottages, the Department have instituted instruction on a considerable scale in domestic economy. This is a large subject, and covers a great many divisions. There is little hope of awakening in the minds of the older people any desire for great changes. But the young people taught in their youth the blessings which come to them by observing cleanly habits, and preparing simple food according to the most approved methods, become ambitious to reach a higher ideal. I have seen some of these improved homes; indeed in many places they can be selected by the passer-by.

It may be the old window is removed and a larger inserted; a delicate curtain, clean as new fallen snow shows behind. The window is raised, so that the fresh air finds its way inside. A pot of bright flowers is seen on the window sill. The outside of the dwelling is freshly limed. All these can be seen in many parts where the influence of the New Gospel of better home life has found its way. Better food follows, while simple comforts are from time to time added. Those living in better dwellings

find also much real help from this branch of work. This is all very commendable, and will in time prove a National blessing, strengthening the ties which bind the people to their home-land, and increasing the spirit of loyalty, whether at home or abroad.

In close connection with all these schemes comes another agency which gives a splendid opportunity for comparing results and stimulating increased effort. I refer to the numerous Exhibitions all over the country, which are receiving aid more or less from the public funds. The best ideals are here presented in the various departments, and thus patterns are set to which the people look and follow after under the guidance of the various instructors. In many sections great enthusiasm prevails. I saw a County Exhibition at Ballymena, where some eight or ten thousand were gathered to witness or take part in the proceedings. The effect must tend towards superior production, especially when so many agencies are employed to give the needed guidance.

There are two things to which I think still more attention should be given. Undoubtedly those showing the greatest need for help and at the same time the most difficult to reach are the smaller farmers all over the country, and especially in the congested areas. It seems to me that the conditions are so different as to call for schemes specially adapted for these people. Some among them are already reached, but others, whether from prejudice or more legitimate reasons, I fear are standing aloof. Personally, I confess my sympathies go out to these poor people struggling for a bare existence. If it could be found, the condition of many would be much improved if placed on better soil, where there is less solid rock and a larger area of soil for cultivation. I have no doubt those in authority will agree with the desire I have expressed, and as opportunity offers will devise methods for the amelioration of distress among this class.

The second great need, and which comes naturally as a supplement to all the work I have attempted to describe, is "further organised co-operation." This need is felt in many places in Ireland, where the buyer and producer should be brought in touch with each other.

In the marketing of agricultural products the fewer the middlemen the greater the returns to the producer. And it is equally true the greater the results of agricultural production the greater is the prosperity of all sections of the community. The whole nation is, therefore, interested in the best markets being reached. Only let this also be done by self-help, and not entirely outside those most interested. Organisations can be effected among the producers which will overcome the difficulty. But some one in authority should lead in this as in other phases of the work.

There are also other directions in which organised effort would be of decided advantage. Take, for instance, flax growing. The information freely offered is to the effect that while the profit in the production of this crop is satisfactory where sufficient suitable labour is at hand as well as the proper appliances for preparing the product for the market, yet the area of flax in some sections seems gradually being reduced, and large quantities are now being imported from the Continent. Here is a case for organised effort. The difficulty is not in the growing of the flax, but rather in the handling of it afterwards. In other words, the growing and the preparation for market are two separate operations. Let the first be done by the farmer and the second by co-operation, and the farmer would receive his full share of the benefit.

More might be written of the commendable efforts now put forth for the improvement of Irish agriculture, but I have said enough to give the reader who has not witnessed it a fair idea of its scope and probable effects.

In conclusion, I have no hesitation in expressing the opinion that the agricultural work now carried on in Ireland is worthy of the nation, having the effect of drawing the differing elements more closely together, and in various other ways will bring about the most beneficial results, the full effect of which will only be clearly seen in the years to come.

JOHN DRYDEN.

REPORT

OF THE

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